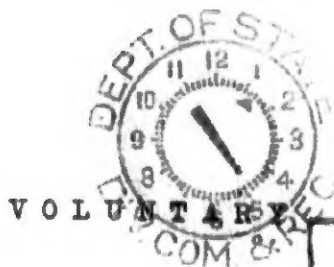


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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEC 7 1932
DIVISION OF
WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

CONFIDENTIAL

CHECK
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in U. S.

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PRESENT LOCATION OF ITALIAN MILITARY

OUTPOSTS IN SOUTHERN LIBYA

DEC 15 1932
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DEC 17 1932

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DEC 19 1932
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

From Consul General
Coert du Bois

Naples, Italy.

(4 carbon copies TP)

JM

Date of completion: November 22, 1932.

Date of mailing: November 22, 1932.

DEC 22 1932
FILED

GP 865C.00/76

In the Paris edition of the "New York Herald" of September 28, 1932, under a Cairo date-line, there appeared an item stating that an exploring expedition had left for the Libyan Desert to make certain ethnological observations on little-known tribes inhabiting the Erdi and Eneidi Hills. The report stated that a professor from Oxford, Major R. A. Bagnold, Royal Signal Corps and Major J. E. H. Boustead, Commandant of the Sudan Camel Corps, were among the European members of the expedition.

The "Mattino" of Naples published on November 7, 1932, an account of the trip of this expedition, a translation of which is attached.

It appears that the expedition encountered an Italian "presidio" or base at the oasis of Auenat (or Ouenat on the 1:4,000,000 map of Libya furnished with my report "Notes on Libya" dated April 2, 1932) just outside the extreme southwest corner of Egypt. From the article, Ouenat would seem to be the present headquarters of the military commander of the Kufra Zone. Since there is a major in command, it may be assumed that it is a battalion headquarters. A battalion in the colonial army organization consists of four companies of 150 men each, but it is not likely that an entire battalion is stationed at this point.

It is also clear from the article that there is a headquarters post at Sarra under the command of a major. Probably there is the strength of half a battalion (two companies) of camel cavalry headquartered at each point.

Since the article casually mentions that the Erdi and Eneidi "belong to the Libyan hinterland" (interesting, if true), it may be assumed that patrols from the Auenat base have penetrated at least as far south as the Erdi wells -- about 18° north latitude. From Sarra patrols have undoubtedly reached Unianga Chebir, 250 km. southeast from the eastern base of the Tebesti Hills. It is not

believed

believed that the Italians have any permanent garrisons south of Auenat and Sarra because of the scarcity of water. Reconnaissance in this country must of necessity be a dash of a few troops between wells, but it is highly probable that the caravan routes stretching southwest from these two bases are under more or less systematic patrol by Italian troops -- probably Eritrean mehari cavalry.

The Tunisian Frontier.

751.6514/62

A confidential instruction (No. 501 dated September 12, 1930) sent to the Ambassador at London (copies to Rome, Paris, Cairo and Tangier) transmitted a sketch map intended to depict the various aspects of the southern Libyan frontier situation. This map carries a blue dotted line (F) to indicate "estimated present position of Italian outposts". This line passes at least 200 km. south of the Tummo Wells. It is doubtful that Italian troops have ever penetrated south of this point.

The Fezzan campaign ended in March 1930. In the course of it the southernmost bases established were at Murzuch, Umm el Araneb, Zuila and Uau el Chebir. Just at the finish of the campaign, a dash was made from Tegerri (south of Gatron) to the Tummo Wells, of which the following brief account is taken from the General Staff report of the Fezzan campaign:

"As a last operation in the occupation of the Fezzan, toward the end of March (1930) it was decided to reconnoiter from Tegerri the region of Tummo situated at the extreme south of our penetration into Tripolitanian territory and actually beyond the Tropic of Cancer between the 22nd and 23rd parallels of latitude.

"In order to succeed it was necessary to provide a special regime for the men and animals who were to make the 500 kilometer trip -- going and returning. These latter were subjected to an abundant feeding against the absolute lack of pasture on the route and the impossibility of carrying barley or being supported by a supply train.

"The patrol, consisting of twenty men under the command of Lieutenant Predieri, left Tegerri the morning of March 30. The distance between Tegerri and Tummo, about 250 km., was covered in three days or 42 hours of actual marching time, an

average

average rate of 6 km. an hour. The terrain traversed was absolutely bare of any signs of life, animal or vegetable. It was possible to water troops and animals only at Ain el Uar (the wells of Tummo). Good water was found but scarce in quantity.

"Predieri's patrol reached the extreme southern limit which has been attained by our troops in the Tripolitanian hinterland (retroterra tripolitano). This reconnaissance constituted a veritable 'raid', because of the distance traversed and the difficulties of remaining alive in the country crossed -- an absolute desert."

From this description, it is obvious that the Italians have not and can not establish any base at Tummo. The nature of the country to the south of it is similar to that between it and Tegerri and it is probable that their southernmost permanently occupied base in this region is at or near Gatron, 250 km. north of Tummo. Gatron is assumed as it is the center or focal point of the four southernmost bases established during the Fezzan campaign.

The Tebesti Hill Region.

Apparently, therefore, the Italians have bases from which patrols may operate at or near Gatron in the southwest and at Auenat and Sarra in the southeast. From the last two it is highly probable that Italian patrols have penetrated to the region south of 19°30' north latitude and west of the line on the 24th meridian (west of Greenwich) which, by the Anglo-French Accord of January 21, 1924, defined French territory to the west of the Sudan.

There remains the Tebesti Hill country, a region roughly circular, 350 kilometers in diameter, where nothing is known about the military situation. The French Consul in Naples told me that the whole region is claimed by the French and that he was under the impression that there were French outposts in it. He related an incident of a French post temporarily abandoned with the flag left flying which an enterprising Italian sub-lieutenant entered with a patrol. He took down the flag and sent it with an escort to the French headquarters with a polite message saying they had forgotten it when

they

they abandoned the post. He was promptly recalled to his base and the French reoccupied the outpost. How much of this is history and how much story, I do not know, but apparently the Italians are percolating into this territory in the center of their Libyan hinterland.

The place names used in this report are spelled as given on the Ministry of Colonies map of Libya, scale 1:4,000,000, with the exception of Auenat — which is spelled Ouenat on that map.

852
CduB:VM

✓
Enclosure: translation of
article in "Mattino",
Naples, November 17, 1932.

Submitted to the Department of State in quintuplicate.

Copy to American Embassy, Rome

- " " Military Attaché, Rome
- " " American Legation, Cairo
- " " American Consul, Tunis

Enclosure:

ENCLOSURE

THE BRITISH SCIENTIFIC EXPEDITION IN CIRENAICA

(From "Il Mattino", Naples, November 17, 1932.)

CAIRO, November 15, 1932. - The British scientific expedition which, under the leadership of the well known explorer, Major Bagnold, had crossed the southern part of the Libyan desert, south of Kufra, has returned to the Sudan, after having accomplished its mission.

The expedition which was equipped with special motor transport, has as object the exploration of certain localities situated along the frontier territories between Cirenaica and the Sudan and on the southern slopes of Erdi and the eastern Eneidi territories belonging to the Libyan hinterland.

The members of the expedition reached Auenat, via Fayum-Karga-Selima, where they were the guests of the Italian detachment, stationed in that district in command of Major Rolle, Commander of the Kufra zone. It later made contact at the wells of Sarra with the detachment in charge of Major Lorenzini.

The Italian officers and troops accorded a very cordial and friendly reception and a demonstration of comradeship was exchanged between the Italian and British officers and troops.

The Auenat, where there are deposits of water and the wells of Sarra were reached by the Italian troops of the Kufra Expedition immediately after the occupation of those oases, in the pursuit of the rebel detachments which had retired towards the south and southeast.

These points have constituted since then bases for detachments of Libyan troops and periodical reconnaissances to the surrounding water posts are being carried out, the caravan roads are being patrolled and that zone of the Libyan desert is being policed.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Paris, November 24, 1933.



DEC 5 33

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| DEPARTMENT OF STATE |
| DEC 7 1933 |
| DIVISION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN AFFAIRS |

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT
(No. W. D. 1336)

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| Routing | Distribution Instructions |
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To the Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

The American Chargé d'Affaires ad interim
forwards herewith Mr. Warrington Dawson's Con-
fidential Report No. W. D. 1336, dated November
24, 1933.

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DEC 9 - 1933

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(4 carbon copies FP)
4 Carbon Copies
Received FP

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EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Paris, November 24, 1933.

Serial No. W. D. 1336.

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT,

By Warrington Dawson,
Special Assistant.

SUBJECT: Italian Ambitions in Africa

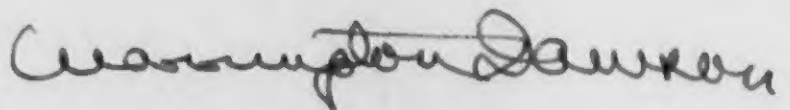
With reference to the remarks concerning Italy's trans-African ambitions, aiming to establish direct communications over an all-Italian route to the Atlantic, as mentioned in Strictly Confidential Report No. W. D. 1312 of September 28, 1933, and Special Report No. W. D. 846 of November 12, 1930, it may be of interest to note that the MORNING POST published on November 16, 1933, an article intimating that the appointment of former Air Minister Balbo to Libya had importance from this point of view and that it was a mistake to consider that he had been relegated to an unimportant position.

I find

I find upon inquiry among my French friends who are connected with French Colonial matters from the administrative point of view that General Balbo's appointment has caused anxiety here because of Lake Chad and other French possessions, very much as suggested by the MORNING POST.

The original of this article is enclosed.

Very respectfully,



Warrington Dawson,
Special Assistant.

✓ Enclosure: (in single copy)

Article from the MORNING POST of November 16, 1933.

In quintuplicate

851.9111/6a

Copy to E. I. C.

WD/DRS

From the American Embassy, Paris.

Article from the MORNING POST of November 16, 1933.

POST, THURSDAY, NOV

ITALY'S PLANS IN AFRICA

Balbo's Significant Mission

PENETRATION TO THE SOUTH

Vital Negotiations with France

From Our Own Correspondent

ROME.

There are some who would liken the "retirement" of Air Marshal Balbo from the post of Air Minister to the fall of Icarus. They see in his appointment to the Governorship of Libya a species of political banishment to a colonial hinterland. Such commentators make a grave misreading of the signs.

The appointment of Italo Balbo to Libya means, in short, that the expansion of Italy in Africa is to have a highly important place in Signor Mussolini's pro-



The Southern boundary of Libya (shown by thick broken line) is disputed by Italy.

gramme It means that Italy is ready to accept or assert her rights on these indeterminate zones leading to Lake Chad from Tummo and to the Soudan from Kufra. It means the beginning of her participation in the political and economic "division" of Africa.

FRONTIER PROBLEMS

What are the frontier situations with which Balbo will have to deal? They constitute a record of mileage, whose frontages and political implications change rapidly in a succession of dates from 1899 until the present day.

In 1899, Tripoli formed part of the Ottoman Empire, and the Libyan desert hinterland was a loosely defined Turkish *vilayet*. In that year France and Britain signed a Declaration defining their respective zones of influence in those Libyan regions by the Tropic of Cancer.

In 1911 Italy made war with Turkey. In 1912 peace was signed and the sovereignty of Italy in Tripoli was established but, although debated by Italy, rights and prerogatives in Libya were claimed and reserved by the Sultan of Turkey. In 1913 Italian actual possession was confined practically to more or less precarious garrison posts along the Mediterranean seaboard belt.

In May, 1915, the Secret Treaty of London signed by Britain, France, Russia and Italy, gave Allied recognition of all Italy's claims to these Libyan rights and prerogatives hitherto reserved to the Sultans of Turkey. It further specified favourable readjustment of Italian interests and frontiers in Africa. In August, 1915, Italy, as one of the Allies, declared war on Turkey. In 1917 the Allied Treaty of St. Jean de Maurienne more specifically envisaged the prospective partition of Turkish possessions among the potentially victorious Allies.

After the Armistice the rectification of the East Libyan (Cyrenaica) frontier towards Egypt was promised (and fulfilled in 1925); the western frontier towards Tunisia was straightened; but Italy's claims to southern extensions as the Successor State to Ottoman territory, leading to Lake Chad, were in substance ignored.

FRANCE'S INFLUENCE

In 1919 an Anglo-French Convention was concluded affecting the frontier of the 1899 Anglo-French Declaration. The new arrangement added about 110,000 square miles to France's zone; tended to interfere with the approaches to Lake Chad on the south-west; and was a step towards cutting all communication between the oases of Kufra and important margins of the Soudan on the south-east.

Italy tabled her right to ignore the existence of this Convention, for the following three reasons: (1) It was contrary to the letter and spirit of the Treaties of London and St. Jean; (2) it overlapped Italian rights as Successor State to Turkish possessions; and (3) it had been concluded without consultation with Italy, now a neighbouring border and Allied friendly State.

In 1920 the Treaty of Sèvres recognised Italy's claims to the abandoned rights of Turkey in Libya, but all this ebb and flow of diplomacy and documents was merely words and paper as far as Italy was concerned, because of the effete Governments in power in Rome.

That was the position in 1923 when Mussolini and his Fascist Government came into power. He saw that Italy could never drive home her claims or expansion until Rome had established its rule finally and unmistakably over all Libya right south to the limits of its internationally undisputed possessions. He saw that diplomacy must be backed, not by a neglected garrison virtually beleaguered in the town of Tripoli, but by master-ports in the Fezzan and Kufra.

In the spring of 1933 Marshal Badoglio announced to Rome the complete pacification, control, and occupation of all Libya. Italy is now in the "African game," and means to have her southern position clarified.

On October 25 a monument in the design of a Fascist lictor, surmounted by a Roman eagle facing south, was unveiled with appropriate ceremony at distant Kufra. On its base is inscribed: "Here arrived and alighted the Roman eagles of Savoy, in the sign of the lictor and in name of the Italy of Mussolini. They will retake their flight." On November 7 Air Marshal Italo Balbo, *condottiere* of Italian ambition, was appointed Governor of Libya. To those who have eyes to see there are new horizons in Africa.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ROME, January 18, 1934.

Sir:

Subject: Italian Colonial Budget for 1934-35.

Assistant Secretary
of State
FEB 7 - 1934
MR. SAYRE

RECEIVED
FEB 11 1934

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
FEB 14 1934

RECEIVED
FEB 14 1934

Office of Economic Affairs
FEB 2 1934
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The Secretary of State,

Washington, D.C.

Sir:

8650.00/74

With reference to this Embassy's despatch No. 1404 of
May 3, 1932, concerning the report on the colonial budget for
that year, I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of
the Report on the Colonial Budget for 1934-35.

The report is brief and moderate in its demands, sub-
stantially the same contributions from the Italian Treasury
to the four colonial treasuries of Tripolitania, Cirenaica,
Eritria and Somalia being requested as for the current fiscal
year, besides which a reduction of 9,240,000 lire in the ex-

penses

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penses of the Ministry of Colonies is shown. No ambitions are voiced in the report for further conquests but rather the desirability of consolidating and making permanent what has already been achieved is stressed. The peacefulness of the colonies is emphasized in contrast to the troubled state of Europe and the policy of creating "always larger and more solid spheres of interest in maintaining the present pacific situation among the local populations" is urged as the most farsighted one. The report admits that the recent visit of the King to Eritria caused some speculation concerning Italy's ambitions in Africa, especially with regard to Italy's relations with Abyssinia, but adds that the alarms faded away in the face of Italy's "manifestly pacific attitude" and that the Italian Minister at Addis Ababa and the Governors of Eritria and Somalia are collaborating in the closest harmony. With regard to Fezzan, the extreme southern portion of Tripolitania the limits of which are still a question between France and Italy, the report reflects a distinct jealousy of foreign penetration into this region and complains that the Italian Government accords too great a liberality to foreign scientific expeditions there. The report also calls attention to the breaking up of the concentration camps established to aid the pacification of Cirenaica, and to the consequent return of the native population to normal agricultural pursuits, which it emphasizes as a noteworthy accomplishment. In this connection it might be pointed out that there have been no recurrences of disturbances such as the Cirenaican revolt, the suppression of which was described in the Embassy's despatch No. 1404 of May 6, 1932, already referred to. 124

In so far as the Embassy is aware, there appears to have been no comment in the Italian press on the subject of the report on the colonial budget. The Paris ~~TELEPS~~ ^{TELEPS}, however, carries an article, of which a translation is enclosed, referring to the subject matter of the report and suggesting that the brevity and restrained tone of the document lends weight to the viewpoint that Italy is at present less concerned with colonial expansion than with continental problems.

Marshall Balbo, who, as stated in my despatch No. 205 of November 10, 1935, has been appointed Governor of Tripolitania, has after considerable delay finally proceeded to Tripoli and assumed the duties of his new post. The accounts of the ceremonies relating to his arrival at Tripoli have received the usual publicity in the Italian papers but, as might be expected, the nature of this publicity has not settled the mooted question as to whether Balbo was relegated to this position in order to remove him from the Fascist spotlight in Italy or was presented with this distinction as a reward for outstanding services. Those who are inclined to the former viewpoint find in this appointment a support to their contention that for the moment the colonies are playing a subordinate role in the preoccupations of the Italian Government.

865.00/1687

865.00

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:

Alexander C. Kirk,
Counselor of Embassy.

Enclosures:

Report;
Translation article from Paris ~~TELEPS~~ ^{TELEPS}.

RH/amc

851

T R A N S L A T I O N

The Development of the Italian Colonies.

(Paris TEMPS, January 6, 1934).

During the course of these last years, the political effort of Italy has manifested itself principally within the frame of Europe. The problems of Italian expansion in other continents has passed to the background. And that is why, doubtless, the report on the budget of colonies which has just been placed on the desk of the Chamber, is one of the most restrained. It only contains four chapters of brief extent. The one which relates to the economic life of the colonies, however, contains one passage on "the demographic finality of the Libyan colonization", which merits underlining. Tripolitania and Cirenaica," it says, "although they in no way constitute an outlet for emigrants proportionate to our needs, may be able, without insurmountable difficulties, to be transformed into provinces of Italian population. A reasonable influx of colonists would serve, together with the natural increase of immigrant families, to create in Libya a metropolitan population apt, on account of its higher political and economic personality, to occupy the first place in the country even if it remains numerically inferior. Then, along the central Mediterranean, over an immense extent, Libya will be encircled by a crown of Italian cities: indestructible conquest which, in political reality, will give value to the heroic sacrifice of our soldiers, the bitter fatigue of our colonists, the fervor of our chiefs and, above all, the great passion of Il Duce."

The report only touches upon the problem of Italo-Abyssinian relations. The visit of the King to Eritria did not fail to arouse in certain interested quarters alarms concerning our expansionist visions. However, the rumors in question faded away of

themselves

themselves, without the necessity for denying them, in the light of our manifestly pacific attitude. Our relations with Ethiopia, our closest African neighbor, have remained cordial as has been traditional from the beginning. This fact permits a good augury for the practical solution of our common problems to which are joined, in one way or another, considerable economic and political interests. Our Minister to Addis Ababa and the Governors of Eritria and Somalia collaborate in this regard with the completest uniformity of views."

The exploration of Fezzan, i.e. the immense country still little known, which constitutes the southern portion of Tripoli, was the object of a curious commentary. It is known that this exploration is pursued under the high direction of the Royal Italian Geographic Society presided over by the Duke of Aosta, former leader of the Tripolitan Menarists. Already many naturalists, doctors, archeologists, botanists and zoologists of the peninsular have overrun this interesting region conquered for civilization by Italy. But the Fezzan, mysterious still in many of its parts, has also attracted many foreign scholars, Germans for the most part, like the famous Dr. Frobenius. Concerning them the report speaks of "excessive zeal" and deplores the "too great scientific liberality" which Italy accords them. And to conclude they wish to if a search of the archives reserved for the Minister of Colonies would not disclose that "the name of one of these savants is not connected with attempts to organize a revolt in Eritria at the outbreak of the World War."

CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI N. 1942-A

RELAZIONE DELLA GIUNTA GENERALE DEL BILANCIO

(RELATORE PACE)

SUL

DISEGNO DI LEGGE

PRESENTATO DAL MINISTRO DELLE FINANZE

(JUNG)

nella seduta dell' 11 dicembre 1933 - Anno XII

Stato di previsione della spesa del Ministero delle colonie
per l'esercizio finanziario dal 1° luglio 1934 al 30 giugno 1935

Presentata alla Presidenza il 14 dicembre 1933 - Anno XII

INDICE

| | |
|---|--------|
| I. — LA FINANZA | Pag. 4 |
| II. — LA VITA ECONOMICA | » 8 |
| III. — LA POLITICA | » 11 |
| IV. — LA PROPAGANDA E GLI STUDI | » 13 |
| DISEGNO DI LEGGE | » 15 |

I. — LA FINANZA.

ONOREVOLI CAMERATI ! — Il bilancio delle Colonie per l'esercizio 1934-35 si presenta sostanzialmente identico a quello dell'esercizio in corso, come entità di spesa e distribuzione delle impostazioni. In base alla rinnovata legge sul consolidamento, immutati restano i contributi dello Stato ai quattro bilanci coloniali, nella somma complessiva di

424 milioni di lire. Viene soltanto ridotto da 15 milioni a 5.780,000 lire il fondo a disposizione del Ministero, istituito nell'esercizio in corso, con una diminuzione perciò di lire 9,240,000, che rappresenta una vera economia. Con l'aggiunta degli stanziamenti per le spese generali, del personale e dell'Amministrazione centrale, che ammontano in totale a lire 21,586,581.30, si ha l'onere complessivo dello Stato per le Colonie in milioni 448,346,581.30.

Di fronte a questo onere stanno le entrate proprie delle Colonie per l'ammontare di milioni 161,435,000 così distribuite:

Tripolitania: lire 70,200,000, con una diminuzione di 800,000 lire in confronto allo stato di previsione dell'esercizio in corso;

Cirenaica: lire 48,680,000 pari a quelle dell'esercizio in corso;

Eritrea: lire 19,026,150 con una diminuzione di 728,850;

Somalia: lire 22,000,000, pari a quelle dell'esercizio in corso.

.

Qualche considerazione meritano queste cifre in confronto con i dati dei consuntivi.

I bilanci di talune Colonie, specialmente quelli della Tripolitania e della Cirenaica, ci appaiono con un cospicuo residuo attivo.

Dai dati pervenuti al Ministero in questi ultimi tempi e comunicati alla vostra Giunta, risulta che i bilanci delle quattro Colonie, alla fine dell'esercizio 1932-33, presentavano avanzi per circa 40 milioni. È utile dare, nei prospetti che seguono, la dimostrazione di questi avanzi accertati alla fine dell'esercizio predetto.

TRIPOLITANIA.

Avanzo dell'esercizio finanziario 1932-33 L. 16,792,426.27

A costituirlo hanno contribuito:

la *Gestione di competenza* per L. 11,247,636.67
così dimostrata:

Entrata

a) Maggiori entrate per reintegri (1) in lire 2,862,363.87, dalle quali detratte le *minori entrate avutesi sui cespiti propri della Colonia* in lire 1,815,453.70, si ha un beneficio di L. 1,046,910.17

b) Ricavo della vendita di beni del demanio patrimoniale » 707,729.95

Spesa

c) Economie sulle spese militari, per minor numero di effettivi mantenuti in servizio in confronto alla forza organica » 9,347,002.40

d) Economie di minor rilievo su tutti gli altri titoli » 145,994.15

L. 11,247,636.67
L. 11,247,636.67

e la *Gestione dei Residui* per L. 5,544,789.60
così dimostrata:

Entrata

e) Maggiori accertamenti di residui attivi L. 1,644,736.14

Spesa

f) Economie sui residui passivi » 3,900,053.46

L. 5,544,789.60
» 5,544,789.60

L. 16,792,426.27

(1) I reintegri di cui sopra riguardano essenzialmente *ricuperi* di somme fatti sui vari articoli della parte civile e della parte militare del bilancio. Soltanto per minima parte riguardano versamenti per superi di anticipazioni concesse a funzionari delegati.

CIRENAICA.

Avanzo dell'esercizio finanziario 1932-33 L. 21,784,581.95

A costituirlo hanno contribuito:

la *Gestione di competenza* per L. 14,351,553.95

così dimostrata:

Entrata

a) Maggiori entrate verificate nei cespiti propri della Colonia L. 562,899.11

b) Maggiori entrate per reintegri » 10,663,353.24

c) Ricavo della vendita di beni del demanio patrimoniale » 113,116.05

Spesa

d) Economie sulle spese civili » 872,303.94

e) Economie sulle spese militari » 2,136,201.27

f) Economie di minor rilievo su tutti gli altri titoli » 3,680.34

L. 14,351,553.95

L. 14,351,553.95

e la *Gestione dei residui* per L. 7,433,028 —

così dimostrata:

Entrata

g) Maggiori accertamenti di residui attivi L. 3,080,735.22

Spesa

h) Economie sui residui passivi » 4,352,202.78

L. 7,433,028 —

» 7,433,028 —

L. 21,784,581.95

ERITREA.

Avanzo dell'esercizio finanziario 1932-33 L. 457,680.12

A costituirlo hanno contribuito:

la *Gestione di competenza* per L. 98,543.84

(detta risultanza è stata determinata da un *maggior utile* delle ferrovie, compreso fra gli accertamenti del bilancio della Colonia, nonché da *reintegri*, versati in entrata, e non iscritti per il reimpiego nella spesa, che hanno pure permesso di compensare le *minori entrate* per l'importo di lire 200,992.15);

e la *Gestione dei residui* per » 359,136.28

L. 457,680.12

(detta risultanza è stata determinata da reintegri, compresi fra i residui attivi, poi non iscritti per il reimpiego nella spesa).

SOMALIA.

Avanzo dell'esercizio finanziario 1932-33. L. 1,452,155.55

A costituirlo hanno contribuito:

la *Gestione di competenza* per. L. 225,619.65
così dimostrate:

Entrata

a) Minori entrate nella Categoria III « Contabilità speciali ». — L. 1,760,971.95

Spesa

b) Economie sulle spese effettive ordinarie + » 225,619.65

c) Economie sulle spese della Categoria III « Contabilità speciali » + » 1,760,971.95

L. 225,619.65

L. 225,619.65

e la *Gestione dei residui* per L. 1,226,535.90
così dimostrata:

Entrata

d) Maggiori accertamenti di residui attivi L. 930,854.98

Spesa

e) Economie sui residui passivi, » 295,680.92

L. 1,226,535.90

» 1,226,535.90

L. 1,452,155.55

Per quanto riguarda il conto dei residui, va notato che vi sono dei residui veri e propri, rappresentanti cioè debiti dell'Amministrazione verso terzi e somme rimaste da pagare alla fine dell'esercizio; ma questi ammontano a poche migliaia di lire. L'importo quasi totale delle somme, che nel consuntivo figurano quali residui, è, invece, rappresentato dall'ammontare delle quote dei contributi statali a pareggio dei bilanci coloniali, che, al 30 giugno di ogni anno deve essere ancora versato in entrata delle contabilità speciali istituite per la gestione dei bilanci coloniali presso le Sezioni di Regia tesoreria a Tripoli, a Bengasi, ad Asmara e a Mogadiscio. Anziché di residui, si tratta quindi di situazioni rispettive di tesoreria.

Per disposizioni emanate dal Ministero delle Colonie, tali contributi vengono versati alle contabilità speciali medesime al principio di ogni mese ed in quote che rappresentano un dodicesimo dell'ammontare del contributo iscritto in bilancio. Avviene nella pratica che, quando le situazioni mensili di cassa delle contabilità speciali danno come risultato larghe disponibilità di fondi, il versamento viene sospeso. Ciò spiega il formarsi dei residui alla fine dell'esercizio, i quali, perciò, emergono anziché dal rinvio dei pagamenti, da un atteggiamento del Ministero nei riguardi della gestione di cassa delle colonie.

In regime di bilancio consolidato, gli avanzi non possono avere l'importanza che

generalmente vi si dovrebbe annettere. Essi però non possono, per la loro entità, non imporre qualche considerazione.

Bisogna ricordare che la destinazione degli avanzi finanziari dei bilanci coloniali è regolata dalle seguenti disposizioni legislative:

articolo 65 dell'ordinamento amministrativo-contabile delle colonie approvato con Regio decreto 26 giugno 1925, n. 1271;

articolo 21 della legge organica per l'Amministrazione delle Tripolitania e della Cirenaica, del 26 giugno 1927, n. 1013;

articolo 26 dell'ordinamento organico per l'Eritrea e per la Somalia approvato con la legge 6 luglio 1933, n. 999;

articolo 2 del Regio decreto-legge 25 marzo 1929, n. 531 riguardante il consolidamento dei bilanci coloniali.

Tali disposizioni, quasi uniformi, stabiliscono che l'avanzo accertato alla chiusura di ciascun esercizio finanziario è devoluto, per ognuna delle colonie, alla costituzione di un fondo di riserva da destinarsi:

a) a fronteggiare straordinarie necessità di bilancio derivanti: da minori gettiti delle entrate, dalla gestione dei residui e da altre cause eccezionali;

b) alle spese straordinarie di carattere patrimoniale o ad altre di pubblica utilità alle quali non si possa far fronte con le entrate proprie della Colonia.

Le prelevazioni dal detto fondo sono disposte dal Governatore, con propri decreti che vengono comunicati al Ministero delle colonie e a quello delle Finanze.

A tale riguardo è da osservare che, mentre per quanto concerne il trasporto di fondi dall'uno all'altro articolo di bilancio e la destinazione delle maggiori entrate accertate durante l'esercizio, la legge 29 dicembre 1932, n. 1895, per la proroga del consolidamento, ha posto delle limitazioni alle facoltà di storno concesse ai Governatori, come era stato richiesto dalla vostra Giunta e dalla Commissione di finanza del Senato, stabilendo che per le spese di personale, che non siano quelle concernenti stipendi ed altri assegni fissi, nonché per quelle relative alla parte straordinaria eccedenti, annualmente, nel loro importo complessivo e per lo stesso articolo di bilancio il limite di lire 1,000,000, le variazioni di bilancio debbono essere autorizzate con decreto del Ministero delle colonie di concerto con quello delle finanze; nessuna limitazione è stata disposta, invece,

per quanto riguarda le variazioni relative agli avanzi di bilancio.

Considerando le cifre rilevanti che tali avanzi hanno raggiunto, sembrerebbe opportuno che anche per essi venisse disposto che la loro erogazione dovesse essere effettuata con speciali cautele; così, ad esempio, in base a un programma dei lavori e delle opere di pubblica utilità da proporsi dai Governi coloniali e ad approvarsi dai Ministeri delle Colonie e delle Finanze.

A questo proposito sembrerebbe anche opportuno limitare ancora la larga facoltà, concessa ai Governi coloniali, di variare i propri bilanci, durante l'esercizio; il che avviene talvolta in misura troppo radicale.

Esaminando i consuntivi, si rileva che stanziamenti riguardanti servizi, il cui fabbisogno potrebbe essere quasi esattamente previsto in base ai risultati delle gestioni precedenti, vengono durante l'esercizio finanziario aumentati o diminuiti di somme considerevoli. Ciò toglie ai bilanci coloniali quella serietà che tali documenti dovrebbero avere e impedisce di rendersi conto, in sede di esame dei bilanci preventivi, dell'effettivo costo dei servizi coloniali civili e militari.

Un qualche provvedimento sarà da studiare in questo senso. Merita considerazione la proposta, che si fa da qualche organo tecnico, di modificare la struttura dei bilanci coloniali col ridurre gli articoli di bilancio ad un ristrettissimo numero, prevedendo in essi il fabbisogno dei servizi convenientemente raggruppati a seconda della natura degli scopi delle spese relative. Ciò permetterebbe di togliere ai Governi coloniali la facoltà di trasportare, con propri decreti, fondi da un articolo all'altro, lasciando loro tale facoltà nell'ambito dello stesso articolo.

* * * *

Per quanto rapidamente è necessario chiarire il significato di talune variazioni apportate ai bilanci delle colonie, per il loro significato economico e politico.

Il maggior rilievo meritano, per la Tripolitania le riduzioni delle spese militari per la complessiva somma di lire 7,500,000, le quali sono state destinate per lire 800,000 a controbilanciare le minori previsioni di entrate e per lire 6,700,000 a fronteggiare le maggiori previsioni per spese civili ordinarie e straordinarie.

Se si confrontano le previsioni delle spese militari dell'esercizio 1934-35 con quelle dell'esercizio 1929-30, in cui si iniziò il con-

solidamento dei bilanci coloniali, si hanno i seguenti risultati:

Spese ordinarie:

| | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Previsioni esercizio 1929-30. | L. 172,513,660 |
| Previsioni esercizio 1934-35. | » 119,365,000 |
| Economie e riduzioni . . . | L. 53,148,660 |

Spese straordinarie:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Previsioni esercizio 1929-30. | L. 7,783,500 |
| Previsioni esercizio 1934-35. | » 7,635,000 |
| Economie e riduzioni . . . | L. 148,500 |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Totale delle economie e delle riduzioni realizzate nelle spese militari, ordinarie e straordinarie | L. 53,297,160 |
|--|---------------|

Cosicchè, durante gli esercizi finanziari in cui il bilancio della Tripolitania è stato consolidato, il Governo della Colonia ha potuto stornare dalle spese militari ben lire 53,297,160, per portarle in aumento delle spese civili ordinarie e straordinarie, fra cui le spese per opere pubbliche. Solo un Capo che abbia il prestigio del Maresciallo Badoglio, poteva, con animo sereno, apportare una così profonda modificazione nello stato di parte del bilancio militare della Colonia.

Nell'esercizio 1934-35 per le spese per opere pubbliche sono state stanziare le seguenti somme:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| per la manutenzione ordinaria delle varie opere, marittime, stradali, igieniche, ecc., e pel funzionamento dell'officina del servizio idrico | L. 9,100,000 |
| per opere idrauliche e di bonifica | » 200,000 |
| per la sistemazione straordinaria di alcune strade (seconda quota del 2° programma quadriennale) . . . | » 6,030,000 |
| per costruzione di nuove strade e sistemazione straordinaria di carovaniere . . | » 4,400,000 |

Con tale stanziamento si dovranno proseguire i lavori della strada Zuara-El Gotta, Misurata-Sirte e della pista Sirte-Nufllia.

| | |
|--|--------------|
| per costruzione, acquisto, sistemazione e miglioramento dei fabbricati adibiti a pubblici ser vizi | L. 2,500,000 |
|--|--------------|

Con tale somma si dovrà provvedere alla costruzione di scuole, ambulatori, chiese, uffici ed alloggi di delegati circondariali ed agenti distrettuali.

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| per opere marittime | » 1,000,000 |
|-----------------------------|-------------|

Con tale somma si proseguiranno i lavori di difesa del molo principale di Tripoli e si provvederà ad altri eventuali lavori di sistemazione degli approdi secondari della Colonia.

| | |
|---|-------------|
| per opere edilizie ed igieniche | » 1,000,000 |
|---|-------------|

Si provvederà principalmente alla trivellazione di nuovi pozzi, alla costruzione di nuovi acquedotti ed al completamento di quelli esistenti.

| | |
|---|-----------|
| per ricerche, assaggi e studi vari attinenti al servizio delle opere pubbliche. . | » 100,000 |
|---|-----------|

| |
|---------------|
| L. 24,330,000 |
|---------------|

A questa somma saranno da aggiungere le disponibilità derivanti dagli avanzi di bilancio dell'esercizio 1932-33.

Per quanto poi riguarda i servizi economici e di colonizzazione, il Governo della Tripolitania avrà a sua disposizione, nel 1934-35, le seguenti somme:

| | |
|---|-------------|
| per i servizi economici, comprese le spese per favorire ed incoraggiare la valorizzazione economica della Colonia | L. 300,000 |
| per i servizi di colonizzazione. | » 1,475,000 |
| per il servizio meteorologico | » 25,000 |
| per contributi ad aziende di colonizzazione | » 4,000,000 |
| per le spese relative alla formazione di un demanio a scopo di colonizzazione. . | » 1,000,000 |
| per l'avvaloramento agrario del Gebel, mediante la coltivazione dei tabacchi orientali | » 2,650,000 |

| | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| per somma da corrispondere alla Cassa di risparmio della Tripolitania, per interessi e spese relative all'esercizio del credito agrario e fondiario-agrario | L. | 2,215,000 |
| per anticipazioni alla Cassa di risparmio della Tripolitania, per effetto dell'articolo 2 del Regio decreto 5 giugno 1933, n. 829, riguardante agevolazioni per l'ammortamento dei mutui fondiari-agrari | " | 765,700 |
| Totale | L. | 12,430,700 |

A questa somma dovrà aggiungersi quella che verrà corrisposta dal Ministero delle Colonie sul fondo a disposizione per la valorizzazione agricola delle Colonie, iscritto nel bilancio del Ministero.

Anche nel bilancio della Cirenaica dell'esercizio 1934-35, le spese militari ordinarie hanno subito la notevole diminuzione di lire 6,110,000, le quali, quasi totalmente, sono state portate in aumento delle spese straordinarie per opere pubbliche, comprese nella rubrica delle spese per il Governo ed i servizi civili.

Le economie e le riduzioni conseguite nelle spese militari durante il periodo trascorso dal consolidamento del bilancio coloniale, cioè, dall'esercizio 1929-30, sono state le seguenti:

Parte ordinaria:

| | | |
|--|----|-------------|
| Previsioni esercizio 1929-30 | L. | 174,036,000 |
| Previsioni esercizio 1934-35 | " | 99,312,000 |
| | L. | 74,724,000 |

Parte straordinaria:

| | | |
|--|-----------|-------------------|
| Previsioni esercizio 1929-30 | L. | 10,435,000 |
| Previsioni esercizio 1934-35 | " | 6,275,000 |
| | L. | 4,160,000 |
| Totale economie e riduzioni | L. | 78,884,000 |

Questa somma è stata portata, quasi totalmente, in aumento delle dotazioni di parte straordinaria per opere pubbliche.

Nel 1934-35 il Governo della Cirenaica avrà a sua disposizione le seguenti assegnazioni per tali opere:

| | | |
|---|-----------|-------------------|
| per spese di manutenzione ed ordinaria riparazione delle opere pubbliche | L. | 7,230,000 |
| per la costruzione e l'esercizio dei ricoveri per minori ed invalidi indigeni | " | 2,000,000 |
| per costruzione e sistemazione di linee telegrafiche, telefoniche e radiotelegrafiche | " | 200,000 |
| per i lavori di completamento del porto di Bengasi (prima rata dei lavori autorizzati con legge 29 dicembre 1932, n. 1852, per la somma complessiva di lire 55,000,000) | " | 8,000,000 |
| per lavori stradali | " | 10,000,000 |
| per costruzioni varie d'uso militare | " | 2,900,000 |
| per opere pubbliche diverse | " | 6,748,000 |
| Totale | L. | 37,078,000 |

A tale cifra sono da aggiungere le disponibilità derivanti dall'avanzo finanziario del bilancio dell'esercizio 1932-33.

Per quanto, invece, riguarda le spese per la colonizzazione, il Governatore avrà a sua disposizione nell'esercizio 1934-35, le seguenti somme:

| | | |
|---|-----------|------------------|
| per i servizi di colonizzazione e l'avvaloramento agrario della Colonia | L. | 3,000,000 |
| per contributi di colonizzazione | " | 1,800,000 |
| per l'esercizio del credito agrario, fondiario ed edilizio | " | 880,000 |
| per i servizi economici | " | 116,000 |
| Totale | L. | 5,796,000 |

A tale cifra dovrà aggiungersi la somma che verrà corrisposta dal Ministero delle colonie sul fondo a disposizione per la valorizzazione agricola delle Colonie, iscritto nel bilancio del Ministero.

Il bilancio dell'Eritrea non presenta notevoli variazioni nei confronti dell'esercizio in corso; e, infatti, l'ammontare delle entrate e delle spese è inferiore di sole lire 714,516.71.

La diminuzione nelle entrate proprie della Colonia, prevista in complessive lire 728,850, non ha richiesto un aumento di contributo, perchè nell'esercizio 1934-35 le spese straordinarie vengono alleggerite della somma di lire 1,300,000 prevista nell'esercizio corrente all'articolo 87, quale 2^a ed ultima rata del pagamento da eseguirsi alla Società Ghiacciaie riunite dell'Eritrea per l'effettuato rilievo dei suoi stabili.

Tale cessata spesa ha anche permesso, senza l'aumento del contributo statale, di elevare da 4,500,000 a 5,000,000 di lire le spese per costruzioni ferroviarie (articolo 86 del bilancio 1934-35).

Se si esamina tale bilancio, rilevasi ch'esso ha scarse dotazioni per i lavori pubblici vari e per le spese di colonizzazione.

È però da considerare che il Ministero delle colonie ha finora largamente provveduto a tale deficienza destinando fondi stanziati nel suo bilancio per la valorizzazione agraria ad altre maggiori spese delle colonie. Infatti, nell'esercizio 1932-33, come risulta dal bilancio consuntivo della Colonia, il Ministero ha corrisposto al Governo dell'Eritrea:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| sul fondo a disposizione | |
| per la valorizzazione agraria | L. 2,800,000 |
| sul fondo a disposizione | |
| per spese diverse | » 13,920,000 |
| Totale | L. 16,720,000 |

Nel bilancio della Somalia dell'esercizio 1934-35, le variazioni, che per la loro importanza meritano qualche illustrazione sono le seguenti:

1^o) aumento di lire 720,000, nelle spese effettive straordinarie, per annualità dovuta alla Cassa di risparmio di Torino in estinzione del mutuo contratto per opere pubbliche (Regio decreto 29 luglio 1933, n. 1166);

2^o) aumento di lire 473,482.80, pure nelle spese effettive straordinarie, per annualità dovuta al Tesoro dello Stato per quota parte a carico della Colonia in estinzione della anticipazione fatta dalla Cassa Depositi e prestiti per la costruzione della ferrovia Mogadiscio-Afgoi-Villaggio Duca degli Abruzzi (Regio decreto-legge 19 aprile 1925, n. 922);

3^o) aumento di lire 500,000, nelle spese militari, per rimborso alla Cassa di Risparmio di Colonia delle somme spese nell'anno 1931 per operazioni di polizia.

La prima partita si riferisce al mutuo di lire 12 milioni per opere pubbliche contratto dalla Colonia con la Cassa di risparmio di

Torino, in forza del Regio decreto 29 luglio 1933, n. 1166. Tale somma è stata già iscritta nel bilancio della Somalia dell'esercizio corrente, secondo la destinazione datale col Regio decreto stesso e cioè:

| | |
|---|----------------------|
| per opere di sistemazione idraulica sull'Uebi Scebeli e sul Giuba | L. 4,800,000 |
| per opere stradali | » 4,500,000 |
| per opere sanitarie ed igieniche | » 1,300,000 |
| per opere edilizie | » 1,400,000 |
| Totale | L. 12,000,000 |

La seconda partita si riferisce al mutuo di lire 30,000,000 contratto dalla Colonia con la Cassa depositi e prestiti, in forza del Regio decreto 19 aprile 1925, n. 922 per la costruzione in Somalia del tronco ferroviario Mogadiscio-Afgoi-Villaggio Duca degli Abruzzi, già aperto all'esercizio.

La terza partita costituisce la disposta rateale estinzione del deficit, con cui si è chiuso il bilancio della Somalia dell'esercizio 1930-31, in conseguenza di spese straordinarie che quel Governo dovette effettuare nell'anno 1931 per operazioni di polizia al confine etiopico.

Tali maggiori spese, che in complesso ammontano a lire 1,783,482.80, si sono dovute compensare con una riduzione dello stanziamento destinato alle spese per i lavori di sistemazione dell'approdo di Mogadiscio.

Per tale sistemazione sono state già stanziati nel bilancio della Somalia, dall'esercizio 1927-28 a tutto il 1933-34, somme per il complessivo importo di lire 20,039,150.

Dai consuntivi presentati dal Governo della Colonia risulta che al 30 giugno 1933 erano già state pagate lire 13,271,675 per lavori eseguiti e che erano rimaste disponibili lire 6,003,450.

Detta somma residuale, aggiunta allo stanziamento di lire 967,879, iscritto nell'esercizio 1934-35, forma una disponibilità di circa 7 milioni per il proseguimento dei lavori; ciò che ha reso possibile la riduzione sopra accennata.

II. — LA VITA ECONOMICA.

Per quanto riguarda i problemi economici, in genere, e quelli di avvaloramento in ispecie, delle nostre Colonie, non sono da rilevare — in confronto con le minute indagini esposte nelle relazioni dei precedenti esercizi — notevoli fatti nuovi.

Non ostante, infatti, le difficili condizioni mondiali della vita economica e finanziaria, le nostre Colonie perseguono con ritmo incoraggiante la loro attrezzatura, assistite amorevolmente dai sacrifici che lo Stato fascista compie per esse con perseverante consapevolezza. Non sviluppi improvvisi e miracolistici, ma opera tenace e contenuta entro direttive unitarie e persistenti, atte a ridurre al minimo le incertezze di programma.

Così le concessioni agricole, benché le più provate nel momento presente dell'economia, offrono argomento di conforto.

Le finalità demografiche che la nostra colonizzazione libica persegue e deve perseguire, se vuole veramente costruire sulle sponde dell'Africa vicina una situazione politica nei secoli, si vengono sempre più delineando nelle loro possibilità concrete.

Tripolitania e Cirenaica, benché non costituiscano per nulla uno sbocco di emigrazione proporzionato al nostro bisogno, nondimeno, per la loro assai modesta entità demografica indigena, potranno, senza difficoltà insormontabili, trasformarsi in province di popolazione italiana. Un ragionevole afflusso di colonizzatori, che la ripresa economica del mondo non potrà non determinare meccanicamente intorno ai primi nuclei che vanno laboriosamente affermandosi, servirà, coi naturali incrementi della popolazione che sarà venuta stabilendosi sul posto, a costituire un insieme di popolazione metropolitana, atta, per la sua più elevata personalità politica ed economica, a primeggiare in pieno, anche se numericamente inferiore, sul complesso della popolazione. Allora la Libia orlerà il Mediterraneo centrale, per un tratto immenso, di una corona di città e di cittadine italiane: indistruttibile conquista di primato, che avvalorerà nella realtà politica il sacrificio eroico dei soldati, l'aspra fatica dei lavoratori, il fervore dei Capi, e soprattutto l'alta passione del Duce, che questi problemi sente e persegue con consapevolezza.

È certamente motivo di buona speranza, in quest'opera di vasto respiro, il poter considerare quello che in Tripolitania, nei nuovi centri di colonizzazione della Gefara e del Gebel, è stato raggiunto in un decennio di sforzi individuali sorretti dallo Stato. Se non mancano lamentele più o meno giustificate, queste sono inerenti al meccanismo non mai rapido quanto è nel desiderio del coltivatore (ed in talune evenienze forse quanto occorrerebbe), con cui gli aiuti pervengono. Ma nel complesso — tranne eccezioni inevitabili — le imprese che periscono sono quelle viziate

in sul nascere da incompetenza o da incomprendimento del problema. Quelle attrezzate moralmente e finanziariamente fioriscono. Ed anche là dove l'impresa non è stata esattamente commisurata alle forze, la sincerità e la passione degli agricoltori autentici resistono, pur tra le incertezze, e finiranno col trionfare. La bontà del raccolto dei cereali ha dato, quest'anno, respiro ad imprese anche pericolanti e nuova fiducia agli agricoltori.

Le migliori speranze permette di formulare lo stato della colonizzazione in Cirenaica. Giunta tardi, dopo la ventennale guerriglia, ai veri e propri problemi di avvaloramento, questa Colonia ha potuto approfittare delle esperienze della Tripolitania: preziose esperienze, perché nostre, e perciò di quelle che — soltanto così per gli individui come per le Nazioni — hanno un genuino valore. L'organizzazione ammirabile che fa capo al Commissariato per le migrazioni interne e al fervore intelligente del camerata Razza, offre ogni garanzia di successo a questa colonizzazione cirenaica, che affronta il problema nel suo duplice ed essenziale nucleo, economico e demografico.

Oltre alla normale continuazione dell'imponente programma stradale — sul quale la vostra Giunta ha fornito le più vaste e precise notizie nelle precedenti relazioni (1) — molte altre opere pubbliche sono venute compendosi in Cirenaica per un complesso di circa 10 milioni. Così a Bengasi è stata

(1) L'arteria costiera Bengasi-Marsa Brega, quella del Gebel meridionale Barce-Maraua-Faldia-Gubba, la strada Cirene-Faldia e Cirene-Gubba e il tronco della strada del Gebel settentrionale da Barce sino a Sidi Hamed el Cheila, possono ormai considerarsi ultimate, tanto che il pubblico traffico vi si esercita già da tempo.

Per completare il programma della rete principale del Gebel cirenaico, si è provveduto intanto all'appalto dei lavori per la costruzione del restante tronco della strada del Gebel settentrionale da Sidi Hamed el Cheila a Cirene, dell'estensione di circa 100 chilometri. L'importo della spesa di 30.000.000 di lire è stato autorizzato con il Regio decreto-legge 16 febbraio 1933, n. 109, ed i lavori relativi si trovano in stato di avanzata costruzione.

Questo tronco completa la maglia principale della rete stradale del Gebel cirenaico ed assume importanza speciale, poiché, attraversando gran parte della zona prescelta per la colonizzazione agricola, servirà i numerosi centri abitati che già stanno sorgendo.

portata a compimento la mole della Cattedrale, ed il grandioso viale della Vittoria; sono stati costruiti il bell'edificio delle Scuole medie, il *fonduk* municipale ed è stato aperto al traffico il nuovo mercato; allargata la via Regina; ampliata la fognatura.

Opere per l'approvvigionamento idrico si sono eseguite al Guarscia e a Sidi Hamed el Magrum, per un importo di circa 400,000 lire; altre, tuttora in corso, riguardano l'approvvigionamento idrico di Beda Littoria, di Labrach, di Apollonia e di Derna. Decorose abitazioni per gli impiegati sono state costruite a Barce.

Quanto ai lavori, sempre discussi come ogni opera portuale, del Porto di Bengasi, essi sono pervenuti già ad una fase concreta. Il molo principale, che ormai ha raggiunto la lunghezza di metri 1256, benché non ancora affiancato dalle altre opere foranee, si è dimostrato di notevole efficacia; si è annunziato infatti che già alcuni piroscafi ormeggiano nello specchio d'acqua del nuovo porto, anche con mare grosso e venti del 4° e 1° quadrante. Fra non molto, le laboriose operazioni d'imbarco e sbarco, con la « giapponesina », resteranno relegate fra i ricordi, non rimpianti, del pittoresco scomparso.

Nel campo delle industrie, Bengasi registrerà, quest'anno, l'impianto per la pastorizzazione del latte.

Assai più cospicuo è il complesso delle opere della Tripolitania. Oltre 3 milioni di lavori mirano ad allargare e rafforzare il porto di Tripoli; e 4,200,000 lire di spesa hanno permesso di portare a compimento il settimo ed ottavo tratto del molo principale della fedelissima Zuara.

Sono stati inoltre eseguiti ampliamenti notevoli all'Ospedale Coloniale « Vittorio Emanuele III »; nuovi ambulatori a Suani Fessano e a Nesma e nuovi edifici scolastici per circa 2 milioni.

La costruzione di uffici postali e Caserme, l'ampliamento degli acquedotti del Garian, di Tigrinna e di Azizia e la sistemazione della sorgente di Hammon a Socna, il ridente capoluogo della Giofra che un Comandante di Zona di alta capacità viene attrezzando con infinite risorse; oltre ad opere igieniche e di abbellimento compiute dai municipi di Tripoli, di Zuara, Nalut, Misurata, Garian e Homs, rappresentano un insieme considerevole di lavoro.

Per quanto riguarda le strade, le opere sono limitate alla sistemazione ed al miglioramento della rete esistente, che si reputa

per ora rispondente ai bisogni del traffico del territorio maggiormente sviluppato (1).

Ordinati progressi si segnalano nelle coltivazioni eritree — specie quelle del caffè — e somale. In Somalia l'industria delle banane perfeziona il suo attrezzamento, con la organizzazione delle culture, dei trasporti (in settembre 1933 ha fatto il suo primo viaggio la nave *Duca degli Abruzzi*, munita dei più moderni impianti richiesti da questo prodotto) e delle vendite cui provvede il Consorzio obbligatorio di Genale, stabilito dal Regio decreto 29 dicembre 1932, n. 1935. La colonizzazione della colonia dell'Oceano Indiano, in genere, fa buoni passi verso il suo sostanziale riordinamento; anche attraverso il graduale progredire delle opere pubbliche, fra cui notiamo la continuazione dei lavori per la sistemazione dell'approdo di Mogadiscio, i pontili di Obbia e di Merca, la costruzione di uno scaricatore a Genale, diversi impianti idrici e di magazzini, e lavori stradali, fra cui la strada Merca-Vittorio d'Africa.

Notevole incremento ha avuto il rimboschimento. Nei dintorni di Mogadiscio, per opera dei vari centri civili e militari, si sono collocate oltre 30 mila piante.

I lavori pubblici in Eritrea, oltre la manutenzione straordinaria del porto di Massaua,

(1) Tali opere, unitamente a quelle di ordinaria manutenzione, sono state eseguite in base a due contratti quadriennali scaduti il 30 giugno 1933. Questo sistema di appalto ha dato praticamente, a giudizio del Governo locale, così buoni risultati, da indurre a predisporre analoghi progetti per un ulteriore quadriennio. La spesa relativa è prevista in lire 41,425,000, di cui lire 23,875,000 per opere di carattere straordinario autorizzate con il Regio decreto-legge 27 novembre 1933, n. 1603, e lire 17,550,000 per l'ordinaria manutenzione.

Sono stati inoltre eseguiti i seguenti lavori stradali: costruzione del Lungomare Badoglio in Tripoli; costruzione del tronco da chilometri 97 a 107 della strada Tripoli-Zuara; sistemazione del tratto Leptis Magna-Uadi Caam, della Tripoli-Misurata; costruzione della strada Jefren-Gefara; sistemazione e costruzione di brevi tronchi stradali a Tigrinna; costruzione di alcuni ponti sulla strada Tripoli-Homs e Tripoli-Tarhuna; per una spesa totale di lire 8,120,000.

Infine la Direzione generale del Genio militare ha provveduto alla sistemazione della pista stradale Ubari-Ghat, per un importo di 2,500,000 lire. Questi lavori iniziano il miglior assetto dell'importante e vasta rete delle piste che collegano le varie località del Fezzan.

e l'impianto idrico di Asmara, riguardano alcuni edifici scolastici e la sistemazione di immobili demaniali adibiti a pubblici servizi, e taluni impianti di carattere sanitario. Allo scopo di integrare il fabbisogno di energia elettrica nel capoluogo di Asmara, si è iniziato il collegamento dell'impianto elettrico Massaua-Asmara, con una spesa di lire 1,800,000.

III. — LA POLITICA.

L'interesse dell'annata politica delle nostre Colonie, culmina nei provvedimenti relativi all'assetto pacifico della Tripolitania e, più ancora, della Cirenaica, nei confronti dei reliquati della situazione di guerriglia.

La più avveduta azione è in proposito quella dell'avvaloramento economico, atto a creare sfere sempre più vaste e solide, fra le popolazioni locali, di interessati a mantenere l'attuale pacifica situazione.

La tranquillità che regna ormai nella Libia non può essere oggetto di discussione. La sensazione della durevole solidità dell'ordine instaurato si ha, piena ed assoluta, percorrendo le plaghe più remote della colonia, con una tranquillità che manca, certamente, in molte regioni d'Europa.

Il documento più caratteristico e rappresentativo del progredire di questo stato di fatto è dato dalle popolazioni libiche fuoruscite, che, sicure ormai della falsità delle notizie tendenziose lanciate in passato dalla stampa estera, rientrano in Tripolitania ed in Cirenaica, ove sono senz'altro accolte ed avviate ai territori di origine e, con opportune provvidenze del Governo, sistemate adeguatamente.

Il movimento di ritorno delle popolazioni si è in questi ultimi mesi intensificato sensibilmente nella Tripolitania, ove numerosi elementi sono tornati in massima parte dalla Tunisia; ove, secondo le notizie portate dai profughi stessi, la crisi economica rende estremamente difficile la vita.

Anche in Cirenaica l'afflusso di profughi dall'Egitto va assumendo, di giorno in giorno, proporzioni maggiori e se la prudente condotta del Governo non cercasse di regolarlo opportunamente, in modo da poter dar subito ai rientrati uno stabile assetto in zone adatte ai pascoli ed all'agricoltura, la massa di profughi rientrati raggiungerebbe proporzioni ancora più vaste.

Il fatto più notevole rimane la normalizzazione demografica raggiunta con lo scioglimento dei campi di concentramento creati

così opportunamente durante lo stroncamento della ribellione. Tutte le popolazioni sono state dislocate in adatte zone agricole ed avviate a proficuo lavoro in tutta la zona che dal sud bengasino si estende fino alla Marmarica, mentre il Gebel è riservato, per le sue condizioni fisiche, del tutto degne di una bella provincia metropolitana, alle famiglie coloniche italiane immigrate a cura dell'Ente della colonizzazione.

• • • •

Per quanto rapidamente, la vostra Giunta non può omettere qualche accenno ai problemi del retroterra — compiutamente diversi, sia in linea economica sia politica, da quelli della zona costiera — dei quali il relatore ha potuto rendersi conto personalmente in un recente viaggio nel Fezzan.

L'organizzazione militare della vasta ed interessante regione, mostra quale maturità abbia raggiunto la nostra preparazione coloniale. Pochi e saldi centri economici e militari, attrezzati di impianti, di magazzini, di campi d'aviazione, difesi da opere campali adeguate alle necessità locali, offrono una rete di capisaldi di appoggio a quell'agile e potente strumento militare che sono i gruppi sahariani, istituiti per competere sullo stesso piano delle complesse condizioni logistiche e tattiche del paese, con le più raffinate formazioni locali.

E su questa base si svolge un piano semplice, non miracolistico, di risorgimento dell'attività locale, fondato sull'incremento e il potenziamento della scarsa ma eccellente popolazione fezzanese, la quale, per la prima volta, dopo secoli di servitù, trova nella nostra protezione condizioni di lavoro umano, vedendo rispettati i propri averi, e trovando aiuto nelle semine e nella vendita dei prodotti delle oasi.

Una rete di piste camionabili che dovrà essere sempre meglio curata e migliorata, collega le località abitate fra di loro e le unisce alla costa: strumento non solo di dominio politico e militare, ma anche di vita economica, largamente apprezzato dagli indigeni, pei quali, contrariamente a quanto suol ripetersi, la rapidità e la comodità degli spostamenti, non appare affatto come un inutile sforzo, bensì come il più rappresentativo ed apprezzato beneficio apportato dalla Nazione dominante.

Questa complessa azione che è militare insieme e civile, economica e giudiziaria; politica, cioè, nel senso più intimo della parola,

si viene svolgendo con grande semplicità di organismi — che auspichiamo tali rimangano per sempre, al di fuori delle tendenze espansionistiche dei vari rami dell'Amministrazione — ad opera di un pugno di italiani, ufficiali e funzionari, il cui ricordo non torna senza nostalgia in chi ha potuto vederli all'opera. Italiani nuovi in atto, quale li auspica la grande anima del Duce.

Dalla più assoluta tranquillità è caratterizzata la situazione politica delle nostre Colonie dell'Africa Orientale, durante l'anno: fatto tanto più significativo, in quanto le conseguenze generali della crisi economica e quelle particolari dovute alla mancanza delle piogge, hanno messo a dura prova la vita naturale di quelle popolazioni, senza diminuire in esse la fede al Governo, o comunque affievolire il senso della disciplina.

I Governi coloniali sono peraltro intervenuti con una notevole assistenza materiale: mediante l'impiego di mano d'opera per l'esecuzione di opere pubbliche, la concessione di prestiti agricoli in natura ed in denaro e di controllati permessi di emigrazioni temporanee in territori oltre confine più favoriti dalle piogge; e tutto ciò è valso ad attenuare, in una certa misura, il gravissimo disagio delle popolazioni e ad assicurare la tranquillità necessaria.

Anche la beneficenza privata metropolitana ha contribuito efficacemente a questa azione di assistenza, mostrando ancora una volta le nobili e generose qualità dell'italiano colonizzatore. Ne consegue che le nostre Colonie orientali hanno rilevato anche in questa dura circostanza una disciplinata compagine sociale nell'amalgama morale delle due razze: riverbero dello stile fascista; che, anche in terre diverse e lontane ed in tempi difficili, ha forza di produrre frutti di ordine sociale.

Eccettuata, infatti, la consueta lieve percentuale di reati comuni nelle nostre Colonie, non si è verificata alcuna recrudescenza delittuosa come conseguenza delle infelici condizioni economiche.

Si sono invece verificati, come al solito, alcuni atti di brigantaggio e razzie da parte di nuclei oltre confine che, in contrasto con la tranquillità interna, hanno reso alcune volte meno tranquilla la vita nelle zone confinarie. Le questioni inerenti sono state oggetto di laboriose trattative, sia direttamente con i capi delle popolazioni responsabili, sia con i Governi competenti.

Questa situazione di non completa sicurezza in alcune regioni di confine eritree e somale è naturalmente in relazione con le

condizioni economiche e politiche delle zone finitime al di là della nostra frontiera, quando in esse l'azione di governo si fa sentire in maniera più debole, o con organizzazione meno compatta.

La visita augusta del Re all'Eritrea, di altissima ma esclusiva portata politica interna, in occasione del cinquantenario della Colonia primogenita, non ha mancato di sollevare, in ambienti interessati, degli allarmi circa nostre mire espansioniste in quelle scacchiere. Le voci, peraltro, sono cadute da sé, senza bisogno di smentita, alla luce del nostro limpido atteggiamento pacifico.

Le nostre relazioni con l'Etiopia, la nostra più immediata vicina in Africa, sono rimaste, come è ormai tradizione, cordiali. Ciò auspica felicemente per la pratica risoluzione avvenire dei problemi comuni ai quali sono legati, da una parte e dall'altra, considerevoli interessi economici e politici.

Il nostro Ministro in Addis Abeba ed i Governatori delle due Colonie collaborano in tal senso nella migliore uniformità di vedute.

La nostra politica nella penisola arabica è intonata alla fedeltà al Trattato di amicizia che noi abbiamo con lo Yemen ed agli accordi felicemente conclusi anche col Governo saudiano. Tale atteggiamento ha dato occasione allo sviluppo di molti importanti interessi che la Colonia Eritrea ha nell'altra sponda del Mar Rosso.

* * * *

Una grande opera legislativa è stata compiuta, durante il 1933, con la legge organica per le colonie dell'Africa orientale. Ma di essa è stato riferito a suo tempo alla Camera dalla speciale commissione.

Altri provvedimenti legislativi che vanno segnalati, per la loro importanza generale, sono i seguenti:

1°) l'ordinamento sanitario, approvato con Regio decreto 20 marzo 1933, che detta le norme generali sull'organizzazione ed il funzionamento dei servizi igienico-proflattici, assistenziali e zootiatrici in tutte le quattro Colonie.

2°) il nuovo ordinamento giudiziario, di prossima emanazione, le cui norme sono state opportunamente coordinate con quelle dei nuovi Codici penale e di procedura penale, i quali, per l'articolo 10 della legge organica, per la Tripolitania e la Cirenaica, sono stati di diritto estesi a queste Colonie;

3°) le nuove norme per l'esecuzione delle opere pubbliche in tutte e quattro le Colonie,

anch'esse di prossima emanazione, unitamente ad uno speciale capitolato generale e ad un ordinamento per la direzione, contabilità e collaudo dei lavori; che costituiranno la base per il definitivo assetto dell'importante servizio delle opere pubbliche.

Molto notevole è anche un decreto del luglio 1933, del Maresciallo Badoglio, in materia corporativa per la Tripolitania. Esso istituisce presso il Governo della Tripolitania una « Commissione del Lavoro », in cui sono rappresentati i Sindacati dei datori di lavoro e dei prestatori d'opera, dell'industria, del commercio, dell'agricoltura, dei trasporti ed i Sindacati coloniali dei professionisti ed artisti.

Detta Commissione, presieduta dal Direttore degli affari economici e della colonizzazione, ha per vice-presidente il Capo dell'Ufficio Federale del Lavoro, ed accoglie, oltre ai rappresentanti delle classi produttrici, anche i dirigenti degli organismi economici più importanti della Colonia.

La Commissione, secondo il decreto, è chiamata:

1°) a dare pareri e ad avanzare al Governatore proposte motivate:

a) sulle norme da osservarsi nella stipulazione dei patti di lavoro e nella disciplina dei rapporti economici tra le classi produttrici, e sulla organizzazione della produzione in genere;

b) sul coordinamento dei rapporti di interferenza tra le varie categorie di produttori;

c) su qualsiasi altra questione di carattere economico, il cui studio ed esame le venissero deferiti dal Governatore.

2°) a svolgere opera concreta di componimento amichevole delle controversie tra le categorie di produttori, e di esame dei problemi contingenti di economia sociale (disoccupazione, infortuni sul lavoro, polizia del lavoro, ecc.), secondo le direttive del Governo.

L'Ufficio Federale del Lavoro, istituito dal Quadrumviro De Bono nel 1928, assume con questo decreto una funzione più importante, in quanto gli interessi delle classi produttrici della Colonia, che esso organizza e controlla, potranno essere posti a contatto diretto con gli organi di Governo ed averne tutela.

IV. — LA PROPAGANDA E GLI STUDI.

Nelle relazioni precedenti è stato rilevato il valore politico che assumono le opere di scienza nei riguardi dei territori coloniali.

In questo ordine di fatti dobbiamo segnalare i lavori cartografici.

Una carta itineraria della Somalia al 400 mila si sta curando, su rilievi effettuati sul posto e inquadrati entro un adeguato numero di punti rilevati astronomicamente. Sono stati per ora rilevati 50.000 chilometri di itinerari e determinate 132 stazioni astronomiche.

Più complessa è l'opera che si viene svolgendo in Libia. Quivi, oltre alle carte topografiche vere e proprie basate sul rilevamento regolare alla scala da 1 a 100 mila delle zone settentrionali della Colonia, destinate alla colonizzazione, e dove principalmente si svolge la vita, si viene preparando una *Carta corografica* al 400.000, basata su rilievi originali, ma inquadrati da coordinate geografiche ottenute con determinazioni astronomiche, carta del tutto rispondente alle esigenze e alle caratteristiche dei territori interni.

Nulla di speciale offrono, invece, le ricerche archeologiche, proseguenti tuttavia con ordine e ritmo encomiabili. Sono annunziate, di già, le prime grandi pubblicazioni su Cirene, atte a valorizzare nel mondo scientifico l'opera italiana.

L'esplorazione del Fezzan, assunta dalla Regia Società geografica italiana, sotto l'alta direzione di Sua Altezza Reale il Duca di Aosta — il Principe sahariano — è in pieno sviluppo. Il fatto che a presiedere la Regia Società geografica è stato chiamato — in sostituzione di quel grande animatore che fu il nostro indimenticabile camerata Vacchelli — Corrado Zoli, che della conoscenza scientifica del Fezzan è un pioniere, affida sulla serietà con cui verrà perseguita la nobilissima iniziativa: naturalisti, medici, archeologi, botanici e zoologi hanno già visitato l'interessante paese, preparando contributi di notevole importanza alla migliore conoscenza di esso.

Molto rumore hanno fatto, in questi ultimi tempi, viaggi scientifici di scienziati stranieri, riversatisi, a dir vero con uno zelo eccessivo, nelle regioni aperte dagli italiani alla civiltà. La vostra Giunta esprime la sua opinione del tutto contraria, in linea di principio, a siffatte liberalità scientifiche. E per qualche caso speciale vorrebbe chiedere che negli archivi riservati del Ministero delle colonie si cercasse se, per avventura, uno di codesti scienziati non appaia in qualche modo legato ai tentativi di organizzare una rivolta in Eritrea, ai primordi della guerra mondiale.

. . . .

Onorevoli Camerati!

Queste brevi considerazioni non possono dare che un'immagine assai vaga del complesso lavoro della nostra Amministrazione coloniale, durante l'esercizio 1933-34. Emergono, nondimeno, nel confronto con le relazioni precedenti, le caratteristiche di tutta questa opera, vale a dire la continuità di programma

e l'unità essenziale di comando. Ciò è garanzia che i mezzi forniti dallo Stato alle proprie Colonie vengono spesi utilmente. Pertanto la Camera fascista può dare con serenità il proprio voto favorevole al disegno di legge che approva lo stato di previsione della spesa del Ministero delle Colonie, per l'esercizio finanziario 1934-35.

PACE, *relatore*.

DISEGNO DI LEGGE
DEL MINISTERO

ART. 1.

Il Governo del Re è autorizzato:

1°) a far pagare le spese ordinarie e straordinarie del Ministero delle colonie, per l'esercizio finanziario dal 1° luglio 1934 al 30 giugno 1935, in conformità dello stato di previsione annesso alla presente legge (tabella A);

2°) ad accertare e riscuotere le entrate, secondo le leggi in vigore, ed a far pagare le spese della Tripolitania, della Cirenaica, dell'Eritrea e della Somalia, per l'esercizio medesimo, in conformità dei rispettivi bilanci allegati alla presente legge (tabelle B, C, D, E);

3°) ad accertare e riscuotere le entrate ed a far pagare le spese riguardanti l'esercizio delle ferrovie della Tripolitania, della Cirenaica, dell'Eritrea e della Somalia per l'esercizio finanziario 1934-35, in conformità dei relativi stati di previsione allegati ai bilanci delle dette Colonie;

4°) ad accertare e riscuotere le entrate ed a far pagare le spese riguardanti l'Amministrazione dei monopoli della Tripolitania, per l'esercizio finanziario 1934-35, in conformità del relativo stato di previsione allegato al bilancio della detta Colonia.

ART. 2.

Il contributo dello Stato, di cui alla legge 29 dicembre 1932, n. 1895, viene determinato per l'esercizio 1934-35 in lire 426,760,000, ripartito fra le diverse colonie ed il fondo a disposizione del Ministero, nel modo seguente:

| | |
|--|----------------|
| al bilancio della Tripolitania | L. 165,500,000 |
| al bilancio della Cirenaica | » 165,500,000 |
| al bilancio dell'Eritrea. » | 41,250,000 |
| al bilancio della Somalia » | 48,750,000 |
| al fondo a disposizione del Ministero delle colonie. » | 5,760,000 |

TOTALE . . . L. 426,760,000

Le assegnazioni alle singole colonie sul fondo a disposizione predetto, verranno disposte dal Ministro delle colonie, di concerto col Ministro delle finanze.

DISEGNO DI LEGGE
DELLA COMMISSIONE

ART. 1.

Identico.

ART. 2.

Identico.

ART. 3.

Il fondo a disposizione del Ministero, per contributi e concorsi di spese a favore dell'avvaloramento agrario delle colonie, di cui al Regio decreto-legge 24 luglio 1930, n. 1093, è stabilito, per l'esercizio 1934-35, in lire 15 milioni.

ART. 4.

Per sopperire alle spese per l'assistenza all'estero dei sudditi coloniali indigenti, è iscritto *per memoria* nello stato di previsione del Ministero delle colonie, fra le spese ordinarie effettive, il capitolo « Spese per l'assistenza all'estero dei sudditi coloniali indigenti ».

I Governi coloniali concorrono a tali spese, mediante contributi da versarsi in apposito capitolo di entrata del bilancio dello Stato.

Con decreto del Ministro delle finanze, le somme a tal fine versate dai Governi coloniali vengono iscritte allo stanziamento del capitolo di spesa predetto.

ART. 3.

Identico.

ART. 4.

Identico.

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REPT. OF *EL* AOUENAT, KEY TO THE LIBYAN DESERT

From: American Consul

Withy

Howard F. Withey.

Naples, Italy,

Date of Completion: November 20, 1934.

Date of Mailing: November 21, 1934.

APPROVED:

Coert du Bois

Coert du Bois,
American Consul General.

865C.00/79

GW

In a report dated August 1, 1934 entitled "Libya-Sudan Boundary Agreement," this office referred to the meeting of Italian and British military elements at the oasis of El Mouenat under circumstances recalling the Fashoda incident and described the boundary agreement which followed. That report referred briefly to the importance of the oasis of El Mouenat due to its wells and its position as a center of several desert communication routes.

In a more recent report ("Marking of New Boundary Between Libya and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan," October 25, 1934) an account was given of the physical fixing of the boundary and its partial marking, just south of the above mentioned oasis, by a joint Italian-British commission. The president of the Italian section of this commission was Colonel Enrico De Agostini.

The officer just mentioned, who enjoys a high reputation as an authority on certain phases of Libyan conditions and events, has recently written a series of short articles which have been published in several Italian and Italian North African journals under the title appearing above. The importance of El Mouenat is indicated by the title and the account given is believed to be sufficiently interesting, at least for reference purposes, to justify the translation of most of it below. The present report does not purport to be other than a translation - paraphrased in some instances. To attempt anything further would spoil a competent narrative by ignorant meddling.

Some of the maps which accompanied reports

written

C.00/72

written by Mr. Coert du Bois, Consul General ("Notes on Libya," April 2, 1932; "Maps and Geographic Data on Cirenaica," May 17, 1932) will be useful to one interested enough in the following description to refer to them. C No 47

Geography

El Aouenat - that mountainous rampart which rears itself on the south-eastern confines of the Libyan Sahara (desert of deserts) dominates like a tower the meeting point of territories of common morphology but diverse political affiliation - inner Cirenaica, Egypt, Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. Recent agreements have made of it the datum point of three frontiers and given it a certain fame.

"El Aouenat" is an Arab word meaning "cherished springs." A glance at a fairly recent map shows that, at El Aouenat, we are on the most important of the elevations which form the eastern border of the Libyan desert. Recent exploration, in which Italy merits a place of honor, has cleared up the mystery of this last geographic expression, theretofore vague, by fixing its limits, and determining its geological and morphological characteristics.

The name, in the sense in which it is used today, means more precisely that vast extent of country included, from west to east, between eastern Fezzan and the great inner Egyptian oasis; from north to south between the so-called oasis of the 29th. parallel and the northern Tibesti and Erdi-Ennedi chains.

Originally,

Originally, this was a continuous block of table-land: since broken up and ravaged by erosion. The scattered remains are the gebel and the "gare" of today, whose tops bear witness to the ancient land levels. In their flanks, out as with a gigantic knife, one may read the whole scheme of the strata forming the geologic structure.

These remains, which today form a pseudo-orography of the vast and flat region, still survive in more or less traceable and continuous series along its eastern and western edges. One going by airplane from Cufra toward El Aouenat soon sees on the left-hand horizon the mesas of Gif el-Chebir, Gebel el-Bahri, et cetera, stretching down from the north east toward the south-west where they eventually almost join hands with the highlands of el Aouenat - beyond which continue other links in the chain reaching to the heights of the Erdi. The western confines are marked by the high contours of the Gebel en-Iuss (half way between Uau and Tazerbo) and by the white and the black Harug. Finally, the escarpments of the Tibesti and the Erdi encircle the Libyan desert to the south like a vast amphitheatre.

Sharply confined on the three sides described, the region is open to the north toward which it slopes gently. This part of the country stretching away to the horizon - and other horizons unseen - is called the Calanscio. Extending along the line Mighen-Tazerbo, it ends on a line with Augila-Gialo and the elevation decreases only 300 meters throughout its length of some 300 kilometers. The region

forms,

forms, perhaps, the most empty, flat and desolate solitude in the known world. For one crossing in a few hours by air, it makes an impressive setting but for one who traverses the country on the ground - even by rapid vehicles - the journey takes days and days filled with unforgettable pictures.

A few altitude figures recently established will serve to give a clearer idea of the formation of this section of the country containing about a million square kilometers.

| | Altitude above sea level | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----|
| | Meters | |
| Median line SE-NW: | | 600 |
| Foot of Gebel el-Aouenat | | |
| Cufra (el-Giof) | " | 397 |
| Bir el-Haraso (Zighen) | " | 280 |
| Gialo | " | 10 |

It thus appears that there is a very slight slope to the north: 0.68 to 1,000 and not observable to the eye.

Marginal reliefs:

| | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|
| Gil el-Chebir (west margin) | 1,020 - 1,085 |
| Archenu (highest point) | 1,433 |
| el-Aouenat " | 1,934 |
| Chissu " | 926 |
| Erdi | 500 - 1,000 |
| Tibesti (northern barrier) | 1,500 average |
| Gebel Eghei | 1,000 " |
| Gebel en-Nuss | 500 - 600 |
| el-Harug | 600 - 1200 |

The geological structure of the high Libyan plateau consists for the most part of Nubian arenaceous formations, sedimentary paleozoic rocks and various other deposits. On the east side, however, the base is, in part, younger, consisting of compact limestones and certain eocene formations. This base supports the volcanic system of the Tibesti and of the black Harug: from this base arise the granitic

masses of Archenu and el-Aouenat. The whole vast scene is dotted with the products of the elements' devastation through countless ages.

Finally, in the center of the Libyan desert - thus circumscribed and characterized - there is a corresponding zone of vegetable and human life: due to its isolation, Cufra with its oasis remained one of the mysteries of geography until just recently.

Exploration.

The essential outlines of the physical picture have been drawn: the mountain of el Aouenat, its most salient element, was the last one brought to the light of geographic knowledge. It had been for long frequented by unknown nomads of this wild region. The rocks themselves speak to us today of prehistoric migration and, perhaps, of habitation. In 1923 Dr. Ball, chief of the Egyptian "Desert Survey," indicated the probable location of el-Aouenat based on vague information which was wrong by some 150 kilometers. He, like many others, was ignorant of the fact that a map published in 1916 at Berlin by Borchardt gave the position of el Aouenat with an error of less than 30 kilometers.

The Egyptian Ahmed Mohammed Hassanein was the first to make a real journey of exploration. Setting out from Cufra with experienced guides, he finally found the granitic system of Archenu-el-Aouenat and fixed its position by astronomical observation, thereafter accomplishing a true work of exploration and description. To him belongs the credit of dis-

covery

covery and the accolade of science.

In the years following - 1924-1926 - the highland was the objective of two expeditions under the Egyptian prince, Kemal-ed-Din Hussein Kamel, a distinguished explorer of the unknown and desert region between the Senusian caravan route Cufra-Uadai and the Egyptian oasis. In the first expedition, from the oasis of el-Kharga via Soebb and Tarfau, he headed for el Mouenat where he arrived on January 19, 1925. He remained there for fifteen days, extending his exploration to the discovery of the oasis of Merga which was at that time but vaguely known. On the Prince's second visit in January, 1926, the highland was more systematically explored with the aid of a topographical expert (Mascarell) and by a geodetic and geological expert (Menchikoff). The first fairly accurate general map was, as a result, published in the French review "La Géographie," issue of November-December, 1928.

Before returning, the Prince went toward the west in search of the wells of Es-Sarra - dug by the Senussi on the I'fero trail and seen for the first time by a European in 1917 (Lieutenant Fucher, of the French Army) and, afterward, by Bruneau and De Laborie (1923).

New information (essentially the fixing of geographic coordination by astronomical methods) was added by the English officer, Major Bagnold, in his journeys from 1929-1930. Afterward he published a splendid map of his itineraries giving rich details of all kinds, including those observed by other

explorers

explorers in the vast desert territory over which he had traveled. In this map - on the scale of one million - the topography of el Aouenat is substantially that indicated in the first place by Mascarell. Bagnold went back in 1932 and marked the highest place reached by a small post.

After the occupation of Cufra by Italy in 1931, the first reconnoissance operations had el Aouenat for objective and posts were established at several places along the route - one notoriously subject to raids by nomads and parties belonging to various wandering tribes of this limitless, ill known and ill controlled region.

From July to October, 1931, a mission organized by the Italian Royal Academy and headed by Professor Desio and one of his collaborators (Cavaliere Ponti) reached el Aouenat from Cufra and afterward explored the oasis of Cufra and eastern Fezzan. Desio was the first of the Italian savants to cross the length and breadth of the Libyan desert.

The importance of the position finally decided the Colonial Administration to prepare a detailed topographical relief map on a larger scale than those hitherto published. The mapping of the Archenu-el Aouenat massif was completed in about two months by four topographical maps prepared by the Military Geographic Institute - a work which has been rarely equalled in the history of topography. The result is a beautiful map of el Aouenat published by the Institute on a scale of 100 thousand.

Professor L. Di Caporiacco, a zoölogist, also

a member of the topographical mission above referred to, collected valuable material and made observations even outside his own special field.

During this same period the members of the Penderell-De Almasy expedition arrived at el Aouenat and concentrated their exploration upon the high plateau of Gilt el-Chebir, while at the same time extending their research in the el-Aouenat territory.

The latest and most systematic geologic and geographic research with regard to el Aouenat and the Libyan Desert (under the direction of the Royal Italian Geographical Society) extended to the northern slopes of Tibesti. The work was in charge of Professor U. Monterin and R. Tedeschi (Engineer). The investigation lasted from February to April, 1934, and it is expected that the published results will prove to be highly interesting.

Position and Geographic Character of the Massif.

It was known even by those unfamiliar with the exploration of Ahmed Hassanein that the massif of el Aouenat was situated astride the 25th. meridian (Greenwich East) with its greater part south of the 22nd. parallel. The significance of its position became evident after the 1925 agreements with Egypt defining the frontier of Cirenaica which reached to the 22nd. parallel - that line marking the limits dividing Egypt and Anglo-Egyptian Sudan.

At first glance, the massif seems to be a compact area of elliptical shape divided into two nearly equal parts by the 25th. meridian, with a multitude of smaller highlands to the north, east

and

and south. There are no gradated slopes on the outer western margin where the drop from the granitic wall to the plateau below is sharp and clearly defined.

The central block is 20 kilometers long (or a little more in the direction east-west) and 25 kilometers wide (or a little less in the direction north-south). The area of the whole massif, including the perimetral heights, measures about 1,500 square kilometers.

Reference to the geological composition has already been made in passing and it explains the presence of the reliefs and their form: a thrust of high raised igneous rocks fractured the old table-land surface - the latter composed of an arenaceous Nubian formation which, in turn, rests on a base of chrystalline schists. The igneous rocks pushed through this covering, gravitating toward the southwestern section where the granitic masses are bare. On the other hand they are more or less overlaid everywhere with arenaceous formations in the other sections where the rock formations incline to the north east. Such a diversity of structure between the two sectors causes contrasting morphological characteristics.

The granites of the south eastern sector are fractured (principally by abrupt temperature changes), rolled downward, rounded in form, and form agglomerations of blocks, some of them of enormous size and of the most varied and strange appearance. There are no valleys and no paths or trails of any kind across

the frowning and gigantic wall, formed as described and framing the south-west angle of the massif. The only instance of a little valley is the one which leads to the "reservoir" of Lueia a kilometer and a half from the plateau, access to which takes about an hour's hard and frequently acrobatic climbing among precipitous ravines, across rock galleries and over rounded stones which ^{have} no toe or hand holds and make the ascent perilous. It is not at all rare here to see, at the bottom of frightful chasms, the dried-up bodies of the agile "uaddan" which, despite their familiarity with the country have fallen and found themselves imprisoned without hope of escape.

The granite sector to the south west consists of two barriers in the form of concentric half moons with a north-south traverse between the two summits: "Mussolini," 1852 meters; "Graziani," 1,429 meters. The external barrier, in its turn, divides into two branches at its western end. The bottoms of the valleys which run between these great ridges are covered with masses of detached rock where, in some places, an accumulation of humus has given life to a sparse vegetation consisting of two or three miserable desert plants.

The appearance of the mountains is different in those places where the arenaceous formations occur: there erosion has carved forms similar to the dolomites- sharp peaks, huge towers, platforms encircled by peaks, et cetera. Such is the really central block of the massif containing, among many peaks, the highest one (1,934 meters) which the Italian topographers call "Italy Peak." They arrived there with

their

their instruments, after an exhausting march, on August 7, 1933 - accompanied by a small party of native troops.

A kilometer and a half from the summit the small post set up by Major Bagnold was found, with a note attached to it. The highest point was fixed and the Italians planted a post and fastened an empty bottle to it with a note inside according the freedom of the "city."

The final great platform resembles an immense leaf with its lobes to the east and the north: the entire contour is marked by a high and continuous rocky wall and, detached from this at a distance some kilometers from the highest point, may be seen three jutting peaks which vaguely recall the three peaks of Lavaredo. The gigantic leaf is itself attached to an enormous stem which runs in a north east direction and the whole roughly marks the flowage divide of the massif.

All the valleys, of whatever type found at el Mouenat, are the work of erosion at a period when the precipitation was abundant and intense - an époque which, in Africa, corresponds with the northern glacial period and from which dates the modeling of the mountain masses of the coast as well as the interior. During very recent explorations wonderful examples of rock erosion were found which, in view of the nature of the rock, should be considered as unique rather than rare.

Flora and Fauna.

The sparse vegetation of the highland is at the bottoms of the valleys: poorer in the granitic valleys, richer in the others where decomposition has provided a more generous humus. The following plants may be listed: *tamarix mannifera*, *cornulaca monacantha*, *leptochloa bipinnata*, et cetera. The trees are limited almost entirely to several species of spiny acacia. All this flora owes its existence to the atmospheric precipitation which, rare and limited to short rains and occasional showers in the winter months, seems to so balance the precipitation cycles as to aliment the fertile pasturage of spring. At that season the mountain becomes peopled with desert tribes who drive their live stock in from Tibesti, the Sudan and Cufra and whose temporary presence is attested by the stone shelters frequently found in the valleys. Here they hunt the "uaddan" and gazelles, and plan their raids on certain Sudanese tribes, their traditional prey.

Summed up: a transient human life; animal life scarce and limited to the "uaddan" (African wild sheep), gazelles of a certain type, a few "Pyramid" rats and some Saharan foxes. The hum of insects and the chirps of birds are but rarely heard in the silence which reigns in these solemn solitudes.

The Springs.

The origin of the el Houenat springs, which give their name to the mountains, must be attributed to the atmospheric precipitation. They consist of rain water which filters through the rocks and here and

there

there finds impenetrable spots which fill and form the few reservoirs. These, doubtless, wax and wane with the changes in rain fall. It seems certain that they are not fed through extensive subterranean fissures.

The report of Prince Kemal ed-Din speaks of eight watered localities found but without precise indication of the places. Until a short time ago only three were known to Europeans. "Ain el-Gazal" (sometimes called "Ain Doua") is near the south eastern angle of the massif at the foot of the granite mountain and was the objective of all the earlier Italian expeditions. "Ain Aueia" spring is near the head of a short and small granitic valley and comes out on the west side of the highland about 7 kilometers in an air line to the north of the one first named. It is difficult of access although possessed of considerable surrounding vegetation of a swampy kind. The water of both these springs was recently analysed by a sanitary mission and found very pure and potable. "Ain el-Brinz" consists of two small basins near the head of "Carour Murr" and 30 kilometers to the east of "Ain el-Gazal." The water is somewhat brackish due to salts from decomposed rock, which is not granitic at this place.

Finally, Professor Monterin and Major Rolle discovered two new springs in March of last year (1933). The first one is called "Ain Dourmé" and is situated in a small valley on the south slope of Carour Brahim. It is surrounded by a circle of seven palm trees - a thing absolutely new in that zone.

The second spring ("Igalé Culoiorti") is about two hours' march from "Ain el-Gazal" and in the dominant granitic range.

Prehistoric Discoveries

Allusion has already been made to evidences of transient human life in the el Kouenat region.

There is tangible indication of its antiquity in the many rock drawings and paintings which have been found in several places in the highland. The first were discovered by Ahmed Nassanein in the valley of Carour et-Talat and he published some photographs of them in his well known book "The Lost Oasis." Prince Kemal ed-Din found very well preserved ochre paintings in the same locality in 1926.

During the Italian topographical expedition of 1930, Professor Di Caporiacco discovered many paintings of the same type near Ain el-Gazal, which he reproduced accurately and published in conjunction with illustrated articles by Professor Graziosi.

Buffalo predominate among the subjects: gazelles are not lacking and some of the drawings might be taken for goats and members of the deer and horse families. There are also representations of men, sometimes armed, together with a few rare dress details, cabins, et cetera. The coloring is flat and lacking in detail, subject to a few exceptions, but a certain realistic sense is perceptible as well as a sense of harmony of line, homogeneity of expression and technique. The frequent superposition of varying styles, however, does not permit of chronological

deductions.

deductions.

In 1904, Professor Monterin discovered still other drawings in Uadiet-Talah and some new rock paintings a few kilometers west of Ain el-Gazal and various other scattered places. He also found remains of prehistoric industries, among others a beautiful axe made of diorite. Bagnold indicates - in his chart already referred to - other rock paintings near the outlet of Carcar Ibrahim. It can not be said that still more paintings or drawings may not be found in the future.

All these drawings have been made by pastoral populations belonging to the post-quaternary. One finds there the "bos Africanus" which lived in Egypt during the time of the ancient Empire but nothing beyond this can be said of the chronology. There are, apparently, affinities with the drawings in northern "Tassili" and the "In-Ezzan" (Cat zone grotto) and with Spanish and Bushman art. It surely seems that, by reason of their complexity, their number and their geographic position, these drawings should occupy a very important place in the manifestations of prehistoric rock painting.

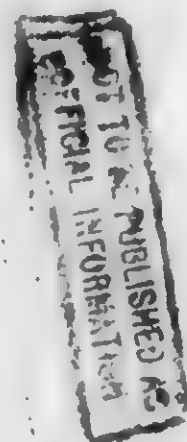
Colonel De Agostini states that he has himself found evidences of ancient life. While watching the native troops dig out a field oven, he found several bones of very ancient appearance. Continuing the digging with great care, it was found that there were two superimposed human bodies. Two terra-cotta vases at levels about 50 centimeters apart divided the two burial places. The upper skeleton was in small pieces but the lower one was perfectly intact. This

material

material was packed carefully and shipped to the Institute of Anthropology and Prehistory at Florence but, as a result of the voyage, it was not found possible to make a study of the skeletons. The two terra-cotta vases were, however, studied carefully by Professor. Graziosi who, while reserving a final opinion, thought that they could not be identified with vessels now used in the region but rather with the ancient ceramics of Nubia and predynastic Egypt. The very custom of interment with such vessels can not be associated with the habits of any existing population of the region.

Boundary Questions.

It may be well to finish this account by reference to the political significance of el Houenat. Its position invests it with two elements of importance to the Italians. It affords the only water supply in a very extensive desert zone under Italian domination. It is the temporary home of nomad groups subject to Italian jurisdiction, which groups have tribal or commercial relations with those in the surrounding territory. These tribesmen are habitual or occasional brigands and their control devolving upon the Italians is, in turn, a factor in their relations with the powers governing or dominating the territories adjacent to those of Italy.



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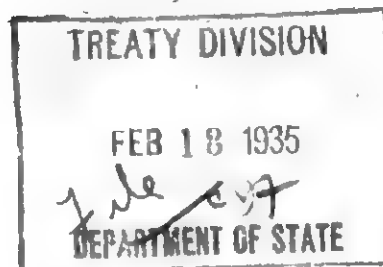
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ITALIAN AFRICA NOTES



From: American Consul

Howard F. Withey.

FEB 1 - 1935

Naples, Italy.

Date of completion: January 23, 1935.

Date of mailing: January 23, 1935.

APPROVED:

Coert du Bois
Coert du Bois,
American Consul General.

Libyan Reaction to Mr. Mussolini's Assumption
of Ministry of Colonies.

The official news reached Tripoli on January 13th in the form of the following telegram from Rome:

"By decree in course of registration, His Majesty the King, at the instance of the Head of the Government, has accepted the resignation of the Minister of Colonies, General (Senator) Emilio de Bono, and has appointed him High Commissioner of the East African Italian colonies. By decree in course of registration, His Majesty the King has appointed the Head of the Government as Minister of Colonies."

Governor General (Marshal) Balbo's immediate telegraphic official reply was:

"Libya is proud and exalted to be under the direct orders of the Duce."

The subject occupied the entire front page (there are only four) of Tripoli's daily newspaper of the 17th., with a large and impressive picture of Mr. Mussolini on a horse, in military uniform and tall plume, occupying most of the center space. The rest of the space was filled with comment of which the theme was, as stated expressly, fervent and inexpressible joy at the news and laudatory recollections of Mr. Mussolini's memorable visit to Tripoli in 1926 - the most splendid and significant event in Libya's history according to the commentators. The drift is sufficiently shown by the quotation next below:

"In recording that visit (1926), evocative of so much enthusiastic fervor, the fascists and all the Italians of the two colonies, united in one, feel vibrating in their souls an expression of hope and of faith already a promise.

. Duce!

Duce! cry the Italians.....come back to us! Return, after eight years and learn whether we have known how to obey your orders to go ever forward like enthusiastic, disciplined and faithful soldiers! Depending directly upon Mussolini, the colony is, by these new orders, drawn into closer contact with the life of the mother country and will surely find a life of new progress in all fields: and the Italians of Libya will march on always disciplined by and faithful to the spirit of the Revolution."

One gets the impression that they liked it.

Administrative Centralization of Colonization Control.

At a meeting of the Council of Ministers at Rome, on January 15, 1935, a draft decree was approved which establishes a central colonization office in the Ministry of Colonies having for its purpose the attainment of technical and administrative coordination of and uniformity in measures taken to advance agricultural and demographical colonization.

Extension of Tripoli-Bengasi Air Line.

The Council of Ministers, at its session just referred to, also adopted an order authorizing the Minister of Aeronautics to extend the commercial and tourist air line between Tripoli and Bengasi as far as Alexandria, Egypt. The Tripoli-Bengasi air route has always been regarded as a trunk line destined to link up with transcontinental air services already initiated by certain European countries and to which Italy can, it is said, make a contribution of great value. It seems to be the official opinion that the opportunities offered for North African air routes,

as a result of agreements recently reached between Egypt and Italy, make an extension to Alexandria imperative or most desirable.

Census of the Indigenous population in Italian Somaliland.

The work of revising and elaborating available material relating to the native population of Italian Somaliland, while not yet finished, is far enough advanced to make known the broad ethnic elements grouped in the colony's principal political subdivisions: the related information has been recently published.

The total native population figure given is 1,014,600. The largest geographical block of inhabitants is made up of those in the Jebi Scebeli district (255,255 or 25.2%); followed by the natives of the Alto Giuba (209,791 or 20.7%). The smallest such group is in the district of Mogadiscio (19,493 or 1.9%). There appear to be 922,274 persons of the Somali "race" while 92,326 belong to other ethnic groups - the related percentages being, respectively, about 91 and 9.

The Somali natives are split up into a number of tribes and the table below gives the colony's entire native population by ethnic groups and administrative districts.

(table)

| District | 1933 | 1934 | 1935 | 1936 | 1937 | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 | Somalis | |
|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|
| | | | | | | | | | | | at other- | others |
| | | | | | | | | | | | Indi- | Others |
| | | | | | | | | | | | ated) | |
| Mogadiscio | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 18, 11 | 10, 671 |
| Basso Giuba | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 170, 11 | 37, 197 |
| Basso Uebi Soebeli | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 180, 11 | 16, 319 |
| Alto Giuba | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 13, 273 |
| Alto Uebi Soebeli | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 12, 373 |
| Mudugh | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 11, 11 | 1, 385 |
| Migiurtini | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 40, 11 | 1, 208 |
| Total: | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 1, 014, 000 | 92, 386 |

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Information sources:

L'Africa Italiana; January 10, 1937, 1938.
Italian Mail press.
"Rivista delle Colonie Italiane;" October, 1934.

Indications of Increasing Caravan Traffic
in the Fezzan.

Some Italian observers of Libyan conditions are beginning to wonder whether officials and others have not jumped too suddenly to the conclusion that caravan commercial traffic was becoming a thing of the past, to be soon relegated by automotive vehicles to an insignificant position. They point to recent caravan activity in the Fezzan concerning which detailed information for last August is now at hand.

The August movement is regarded as significant, demonstrating the probability of a reconquest of the commercial importance of the caravan as a carrier. Before the war such traffic was very active but when the Italians reoccupied Fezzan in 1923 it had completely disappeared.

During the month referred to, two caravans arrived at Brach (chief town of the Sciati) from Algeria, bringing general merchandise in and taking out dates and miscellaneous products. Two caravans reached Murzuch from the Tibesti region, with general merchandise and livestock. Eight caravans consisting of 550 camels and 115 men left various villages for Tunisia, laden with dates and miscellaneous goods. Various others left or arrived during the month to or from Algeria and the Sudan.

Information sources:

"Rivista delle Colonie Italiane;" October, 1934.



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NOTE

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SEE 865.00F National Council FOR Despatch #1082
Corporations/59

FROM Italy (Long) DATED May 9, 1955
TO NAME 1-1197 070

REGARDING: **Extension of Italian Corporative organization to Lybia.**
Recent announcement in the press in regard to,-- Comment on
the announcement in the GIORNALE D' ITALIA.

fp

865C.00/81

ROME, May 9, 1935.

No. 1082

Subject: Corporative Organization in Libya.

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

I have the honor to inform the Department that the Italian corporative organization, described in my despatch No. 961 of February 13, 1935, has now been extended to Libya, according to a recent announcement published in the press here. No details are yet available as to the specific structure of the Libyan corporative organs or the mechanics of its operation within the general system.

It is noted however, that there will be no syndical groups representing the native population, whose interests will instead be handled by the Government with the

technical

technical assistance of the Colonial Councils of Corporative Economy (advisory bodies), whose membership is to include native representatives. The Government will have authority to draw up standard contracts to be observed by the employers of native workers, on the basis of the collective labor contracts concluded by the syndical associations of Italian employers and workers. No provision has been made for representation within the corporative system of foreigners in Libya, it being felt that their status in relation to the system can more effectively be determined case by case than by any formal provision established at this time.

Commenting on the above announcement, the *GIORNALE D'ITALIA* intimates that there had been considerable opposition to this step both in Italy and the Colony, due in part to the selfish interests of certain groups and in part to a tendency to lose sight of ultimate aims in a consideration of present difficulties. Fortunately, it continues, this opposition was overcome by the studies of experts, the efforts of Party organizations, and the concordant views of the Governor of the Colony and the Undersecretary of State for Corporations.

The whole question, the newspaper explains, was one of the future position of Libya in relation to the mother country: that is, whether it was to become to all effects and purposes an Italian province, or whether it

was to

was to evolve an independent economic existence which would some years hence lead to separatist tendencies. The example of France's North African colonies is cited as demonstrating the danger of an independent economic system, that country's present difficulties with its colonies being attributed to competition between French producers and producers in Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. By bringing Libya into the corporative system, it is hoped to regulate the Colony's economy in accordance with national rather than local interests and thus guarantee its future as an economic as well as political unit within the Fascist State.

Respectfully yours,

Breckinridge Long.

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No. 39

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE COLONY OF
LIBYA.

From:

Leslie Gordon Mayer
American Vice Consul.

and

P. Antolini,
Clerk.

American Consulate,
Tripoli, Libya.

Date of completion: November 21, 1935.

Date of mailing: November 22, 1935.

INDEX

| | Page |
|--|------|
| THE GOVERNOR GENERAL..... | 3 |
| THE SECRETARY GENERAL..... | 4 |
| DIRETTORE DEL GOVERNO..... | 4 |
| Direction of Political & Civil Affairs..... | 4 |
| Direction of Economic Affairs & Colonization | 5 |
| Direction of Financial Affairs | 5 |
| The Cabinet of the Governor General | 5 |
| ARMED FORCES | 6 |
| TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUBDIVISIONS | |
| The Four Provincial Commissariats..... | 6 |
| Southern Military Zone | 7 |
| BUDGET OF THE COLONY..... | 8 |
| POLICE FORCES OF THE COLONY | |
| City Police | 9 |
| Government Police | 9 |
| Carabinieri Reali | 9 |
| ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN LIBYA..... | 10 |
| Ordinary Organs of Justice | 10 |
| Civil Matters | 10 |
| Penal Matters | 11 |
| Special Tribunals | 11 |
| TABLE SHOWING THE DIVISION OF THE COLONY OF LIBYA INTO PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIATS, CIRCUM- SCRIPTIONS, RESIDENCES AND DISTRICTS..... | 12 |
| CLASSIFICATION OF THE COLONIAL CIVIL SERVICE.... | 14 |
| RANK AND PRECEDENCE..... | 15 |
| COLONIAL ADMINISTRATION OF LIBYA (graph) | 16 |
| Sources of Information..... | 17 |
| Distribution | 17 |

ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION OF THE COLONY OF
L I B Y A .

Under the terms of the Royal Decree No. 2012, of December 3, 1934, the territories of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica were united to form an Italian colony called "Libya". The colony was accorded a juridical personality and is ruled and represented by a Governor General. The capital city of the colony, being the seat of the colonial government and of the Governor General is Tripoli.

The decree referred to above was followed on January 28, 1935, by Royal Decree No. 101, which established the administrative subdivisions of the colony.

It is the purpose of the present report to give a picture of the workings of the colony under the provisions of the decrees to which reference has been made.

THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

The Governor General is appointed by Royal Decree upon nomination of the Minister for Colonies with the advice of the Council of Ministers. The Governor General may have (and at present appears to have) delegated to him certain powers actually vice-regal in scope, such as the issuing of gubernatorial decrees which, within their scope, have the full force of law and become immediately valid and are to be executed. The Governor General is ranked immediately after the Minister for Colonies. The Governor General is commander in chief of the armed forces, land, water, and air, stationed in the colony. At his immediate command are the Secretary General of the colony and the Commandant of Troops.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL

The Secretary General is appointed by Royal Decree upon nomination of the Minister for Colonies with the advice of the Council of Ministers, and is chosen from class IV of officers in the Colonial Civil Service.

The classification of the Italian Colonial Civil Service will be explained at length below.

The Secretary General is ranked in the colony immediately after the Governor General, and assumes charge of the affairs of the colony in the absence of the latter. He is the principal executive officer of the colony, is responsible for the execution of all orders of the Governor General, and supervises all political and civil activities of the colony and of its government. To assist him in his duties the affairs of the colony are divided into five departments the heads of which, called "Direttori del Governo", may be compared to a "cabinet" of the Secretary General.

"DIRETTORI DEL GOVERNO"

The heads of the five departments are appointed by a decree of the Minister for Colonies upon the advice of the Governor General, and are chosen from class V of officers in the Colonial Civil Service. They may be chosen from class VI should none be available in class V.

Direction of Political and Civil Affairs.

This department supervises such services as the Police, Law Courts, Public Works, Public Hygiene, Schools, Meteorologic Service, Superintendence of Monuments and Excavations, Penal and Preventive Institutions, and the

Colonial Cartographic Office.

Direction of Economic Affairs and of Colonization.

This department supervises such services as the Land Title Office, Agricultural Section, Agricultural Experimental Station, Colonization, Post and Electric Services, Harbor Master's Office, Lighthouses, Railways.

Direction of Financial Affairs.

This department supervises such services as the Customhouse, Tax Office, Monopolies such as Salt and Tobacco.

In addition to the three Directions mentioned there are the Direction of Personnel and that of Accounting.

The Cabinet of the Governor General.

The "Gabinetto" of the Governor General should not be confused with a cabinet in the American sense or with the "cabinet" of the Secretary General just described. It would be best described as a "secretariat" for official matters. This secretariat is in charge of an officer of the Colonial Civil Service of a grade not higher than class V. It is this organization which is also in charge of protocol and of the Bureau of Publicity and Propaganda, known as "Ufficio P.". The Capo di Gabinetto is also appointed by the Minister for Colonies upon the advice of the Governor General. The protocol and relations with consular officers accredited to this colony is handled by a career officer of the Italian Foreign Service who is temporarily attached to the staff of the Governor General's Gabinetto or secretariat.

A Major in the Flying Service acts as personal secretary.

ARMED FORCES

While the various branches of the armed forces of the colony are under the command of officers in charge of the land, water, and air forces, respectively, and while the Governor General is the commander in chief of all the forces, the Commandant of Troops is responsible for the coordination of the various branches and, in case of necessity, for their use.

The Commandant of Troops of Libya is appointed by Royal Decree upon nomination by the Minister for the Colonies together with the Minister for War, and is chosen from officers of the Royal Army having a grade not above that of a General of Division. The Commandant of Troops ranks immediately after the Secretary General of the colony, and is thus the third ranking official.

TERRITORIAL ADMINISTRATIVE SUBDIVISIONS

The Four Provincial Commissariats.

Libya is divided into four provincial commissariats and the "Southern Military Zone". At the head of each provincial commissariat there is a "Commissar General" a civil officer appointed by Royal Decree upon nomination by the Minister for Colonies and chosen from officers of the Colonial Civil Service of class IV. These officials are, of course, the highest ranking within their respective territories and represent the person of the Governor General there. They are responsible for the peace and security of their territories and it is their responsibility to see that all applicable laws and regulations are carried out. They are in charge of the entire police and military force in their jurisdiction and in cases of ne-

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cessity may request the presence of troops. These, upon entering the commissariat come under the orders of the civil commissar.

Each commissariat is divided is divided into "circumscriptions" and subdivided into "residences" and "districts". A circumscription ("circondario") has a commissar at the head of it, - as contrasted to the "commissar general" at the head of a provincial commissariat, see above, - while the principal officer at a residence is called the "resident" and of a district a "district agent". These officials are all of the career Colonial Civil Service, their rank being determined according to length of service and the importance of the office held.

The capital cities of provincial commissariats are, and capital cities of circumscriptions may be, organized as fullfledged municipalities and have a "podesta", or mayor, as principal administrative officer of the municipality as such. Mayors of the larger cities are appointed by decree of the Minister for Colonies upon the nomination of the Governor General, while mayors of smaller centers are appointed by decree of the Governor General upon nomination by the Commissar General of the Provincial Commissariat.

Southern Military Zone.

The Commandant of the Southern Military Zone is appointed by Royal Decree upon nomination by the Minister for Colonies after recommendation by the Governor General and is chosen from among the officers of the Royal Army

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having a rank not above that of General of Brigade. This official is the supreme civil and military authority in the Southern Military Zone and represents there the person of the Governor General. In matters military, such as the defense of the Zone, maintenance of military discipline, and disposition of troops, the Commandant of the Southern Military Zone is under the jurisdiction of the Commandant of Troops of the Colony of Libya. In all other matters he is under the jurisdiction and takes orders from the Secretary General of the Colony.

The Southern Military Zone may be further divided into "zones" which has not yet been done, and into "sub-zones" which already exist.

BUDGET OF THE COLONY

While it has not been possible to obtain any copy of the budget of the colony, or even an estimate of the annual cost of operation, here, it is learned that the entire establishment, both civil and military, as well as specialized services are from funds of the Ministry for Colonies. When officials from other departments are loaned to the colony their salaries and expenses become a charge upon the Ministry for Colonies and no longer upon the Ministry to which they formerly belonged. The only exception to this, so it is learned, are the public schools of the colony which, apparently because of a technicality, are not entirely included within the budget of the Ministry for Colonies. Teachers continue to be paid from the funds of that district in Italy proper from which they have been transferred for colonial service. The colony for the present merely paying them an indemnity for colo-

nial service - an indemnity to which all Italian officials serving here are entitled - and a "family allowance".

POLICE FORCES OF THE COLONY

City Police

This is a small force in the city of Tripoli which is in charge of the supervision of public markets and prices, municipal cleanliness, and regulation of traffic, as well as nocturnal illumination, licenses to commercial enterprises to engage in business, and supervision of the poor.

Government Police

This organization is the one which may be compared to the "questura" in Italy proper, and both the Director and the Vice Director are career police officials from the mainland of Italy. While serving in Libya these officials are under the orders of the Commissar General, and through him of the Secretary General, communication generally being through the Commissar General of the provincial commissariat.

The duties of this organization is divided into three categories: 1) Judicial and criminal police. Investigations of crimes committed, and in general all contacts with the tribunals of the colony. 2) Administrative police, which division is in charge of such matters as issuing passports, letters of identity, and control of foreigners within the colony, and finally, 3) Political Police, the activities of which division will, it is thought, be apparent from its name.

Carabinieri Reali

This is an armed force, and really is a part of the

/ troops

troops of the colony. They act, however, as an auxiliary police force in cooperation with the *questura*. They are empowered to make arrests and to bring criminals to trial before the tribunals of the colony.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN LIBYA

Under the terms of the Royal Decree No. 2012, of December 5, 1934, concerning the Organization of the Colony of Libya, the Italian civil, commercial, and penal codes which are in force in the mother country are extended to the colony of Libya, as are the military penal codes and maritime penal codes. It is provided that the various codes are to be applied in the colony as in the mainland with the exceptions of such modifications as local conditions may make necessary. This provision is apparently intended primarily to take care of the native population especially as regards civil matters such as marriage, divorce, et cetera. Aside from the military courts there are the following Ordinary Organs of Justice.

In Civil Matters:

1. Arbitrators; conciliation; matters up to Lire 500.00 with decision not subject to appeal.
2. "Giudicature"; Informal courts located in sections of the colony where regular courts cannot be established for lack of business. Usually presided over by the ranking civil officer of the district.
3. Judge with the competence of a "pretore", i.e., magistrate. Located only at Tripoli and Bengasi. Handle cases up to Lire 5000.00
4. Section of a Tribunal. Presided over by one Judge only. Apparently in civil matters when there is the consent of both parties.
5. Civil Tribunal. Located at Tripoli and Bengasi only but is the first appeal court for inferior courts of the colony.

6. Court of Appeals. Only at Tripoli. Is composed of the President of the Court of Appeals and two Judges of Appeal.

7. Court of Cassation at Rome.

In Penal Matters:

1. Magistrate as a "pretore" in Italy, or such being lacking, by a "Giudicature" as described above.
2. Section of a Tribunal, and
3. General Tribunal. Only at Tripoli and Bengasi. In penal matters these are composed of one judge and two citizens, either Italian, Arab, or Jewish, according to the race of the accused.
4. Court of Assizes. Only at Tripoli and Bengasi. Composed by the President of the Court of Appeals of one judge delegated by him and four assistants chosen by lot from Italian, Arab, or Jewish citizens, according to the race of the accused.
5. Court of Appeals. Is only at Tripoli and is composed of the President of the Court of Appeals and two Judges of Appeal. (a)

Special Tribunals:

There are numerous "sciaritic" tribunals for the Arab population. Their competence seems to be primarily marriage and divorce cases, and to act as conciliators in minor commercial disputes. They appear also to be the courts of first instance in the often very involved cases concerning inheritance.

There are special rabbinic tribunals for the Jewish population.

There are special tax courts under the "Uffici Fondiari", with possibility of appeal to the Court of Appeals and, ultimately, to the Council of State at Rome.

(a) add: 6. Court of Cassation at Rome.

TABLE SHOWING THE DIVISION OF THE COLONY OF LIBYA INTO
PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIATS, CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS, RESIDENCES,
AND DISTRICTS.

I. PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIAT OF TRIPOLI

Circumscription of Zuara.

District of Zuara

District of Sabratha, (Seat of a District Agent).

Circumscription of Ez-Zauia.

Residence of Ez-Zauia

District of Ez-Zauia

District of Sorman, (Seat of a District Agent).

District of Zanzur, (do do do do).

Circumscription of Tripoli.

Circumscription of Sugh el Giunaa

Residence of Sugh el Giunaa.

Residence of el Azizia

District of el Azizia

District of Suani ben Adem, (Seat of District Agent)

Residence of Tagiura

District of Tagiura

District of Gasr el Garabulli, do do do

District of Castel Benito, do do do

Circumscription of Nalut.

Residence of Nalut,

Residence of Gadames.

Circumscription of Garian.

Residence of Garian

Residence of Mizda

District of Mizda

District of el-Gheria eso-Scerghia, do do do

Residence of Jefren

District of Jefren

District of Giado, do do do

II. PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIAT OF MISURATA.

Circumscription of Homs.

Residence of Homs,

Residence of el-Gusabat,

Residence of Tarhuna,

Circumscription of Eliten.

Circumscription of Misurata.

Residence of Misurata,

Residence of Beni Uliid,

Residence of Sirte,

Residence of en-Nofilia.

TABLE SHOWING THE DIVISION OF THE COLONY OF LIBYA INTO
PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIATS, CIRCUMSCRIPTIONS, RESIDENCES,
AND DISTRICTS. (CONTINUED)

III. PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIAT OF BENGASI.

Circumscription of Agedabia.

Residence of Agedabia,
District of Agedabia,
District of el-Aghella, (Seat of District Agent).

Circumscription of Bengasi.

Residence of Bengasi,
Residence of Toora,
Residence of Soluch.

Circumscription of Barce.

Residence of Barce,
District of Barce,
District of Tolmeta, (Seat of District Agent).
District of el-Abiar, do do do

IV. PROVINCIAL COMMISSARIAT OF DERNÄ.

Circumscription of Apollonia.

Residence of Apollonia,
District of Apollonia,
District of Beda Littoria, do do do
District of Cirene, do do do
District of Gerdes el-Gerrari do do do

Circumscription of Derna.

Residence of Derna,
District of Derna,
District of Giovanni Berta, do do do

Circumscription of Tobruch.

Residence of Tobruch,
Residence of Porto Bardia.

V. SOUTHERN MILITARY TERRITORY.

Capital and Seat of Commandant: HUN
Military Subzone of Brach
Military Subzone of Gat
Military Subzone of Hun
Military Subzone of Murzuch
Military Subzone of el-Giof.

Note: It will be noted that when a circumscription is
divided into several residences or subdivided into
districts, there is no separate "resident" or "dis-
trict agent" for the immediate division in which the
Commissar (see page 7) has his seat.

CLASSIFICATION OF THE COLONIAL CIVIL SERVICE

It appears that the colonial civil service is in many respects comparable with the Italian domestic civil service. It will be noted, however, that "Class I" is missing.

Group A (The Directive Career; University Graduation Required.)

| | |
|------------|--|
| Class II | Governors of Colonies; |
| Class III | Secretaries General of the first class; |
| Class IV | Secretaries General of the second class and Provincial Commissars General; |
| Class V | Inspectors General and Colonial Directors of Government (see page 4 above) of the first class. |
| Class VI | Inspectors Superior and Colonial Directors of Government of the second class. |
| Class VII | Regional Commissars (of circumscriptions) of the first class. |
| Class VIII | Regional Commissars of the second class. |
| Class IX | Colonial First Secretaries. |
| Class X | Colonial Secretaries. |
| Class XI | Colonial Vice-Secretaries. |

Group B (Auxiliary Personnel; High School graduation - "Licenza" - required)

| | |
|------------|---|
| Class VII | Colonial Chief Officer, |
| Class VIII | Colonial Officer of the first class, |
| Class IX | Colonial Officer of the second class. |
| Class X | Colonial Assistant of the first class, |
| Class XI | Colonial Assistant of the second class. |

Group C (No high school graduation required)

| | |
|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Class IX | Chief Archivist |
| Class X | Archivist of the first class |
| Class XI | Archivist |
| Classes XII & XIII | Clerks. |

RANK AND PRECEDENCE

The rank of the various colonial officials is established in accordance with the rules of protocol of the Royal Italian Court. Exception would be made in the colony for the Secretary General, who ranks immediately after the Governor General. At public functions attended by the Governor General, his Chief of Secretariat and his private secretary remain close to him in order to be able to carry out any necessary orders, in the absence of the Governor General they take the places assigned to them by protocol.

The Secretary General ranks before a General of Division and a Provincial Commissar immediately after.

A Director of Government ranks with a General of Brigade, if of the first class, otherwise with a Colonel, which would also be the rank of a colonial inspector.

The Chief of Secretariat ranks with a Lieutenant Colonel.

A Colonial Secretary of the first class has the rank of Captain and a Colonial Secretary of the second class has the rank of a Lieutenant.

There follows an attempt to show the administration of the colony graphically.

COLONIAL

MINISTRY OF ITALY

MINISTERIAL SECRETARIAT

MINISTRY OF LIBYA

MINISTERIAL SECRETARIAT OF LIBYA

MINISTERIAL SECRETARIAT OF TROOPS

Minister of War

Minister of Air

The Secretary

- 1. Minister of War
- 2. Minister of Air
- 3. Minister of Navy
- 4. Minister of Finance
- 5. Minister of Justice
- 6. Minister of Education
- 7. Minister of Agriculture
- 8. Minister of Public Works
- 9. Minister of Health
- 10. Minister of Social Affairs

MINISTERIAL COMMISSIONERS

- 1. Tripoli
- 2. Misrata
- 3. Benghazi
- 4. Derna
- 5. Southern Military Territory

/SECRET

SOURCES OF INFORMATION:

1. Various "Bollettino Ufficiali" of the Government of Libya.
2. "Istituzioni di Diritto Coloniale Italiano" by Lucinotta.
3. "Ordinamento Giuridico della Libya" by Ravizza.
4. "Ordinamento Giudiziario della Libya del 1935" (A Government publication not yet issued.)
5. Comm. Rava, Chief of Secretariat of the Governor.
6. Doctor Gibelli, of the Direction of Economic Affairs and Colonization.
7. Interviews with The President of the Court of Appeals, and the Attorney General.
8. Office of Printing and Propaganda of the Government.
9. Archivist of the Government.
10. Director of Police.
11. Director of the Municipal Police.

DISTRIBUTION: In quintuplicate to the Department;
Copy for the American Embassy, Rome;
Copy for the American Consul General, Naples;
Copy for the files of the preparing office:
AMERICAN CONSULATE TRIPOLI LIBYA

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865.20/119 FOR Despatch #107

FROM Italy (Phillips) DATED Dec. 4, 1936
TO NAME 1-1137

REGARDING: Political affairs- Libya. Increasing dissatisfaction with Governorship of Marshal Balbo on part of military officers in Libya.

The American Vice Consul at Tripoli reported in a despatch dated November 19 1936, that there is increasing dissatisfaction with the Governorship of Marshal Balbo on the part of military officers in Libya. Recent disciplinary measures taken by the Marshal have been deeply resented. The Vice Consul states that "undoubtedly this incident could have a serious reaction at any time."

8650.00/33

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865c.607/53 FOR Tel. 112- 3pm

FROM Italy (Phillips) DATED March 18, 1937
TO NAME 1-1187 872

REGARDING: Political affairs- Lybia. Full summary of Mussolini's
speech to the Moslems in Tripoli this afternoon.

fp

865c.00/84

865c.00/84

RB

GRAY

Rome

Dated March 18, 1937

Rec'd 3:45 p. m.

Secretary of State

Washington.

112, March 18, 8 p. m.

My 110, March 18, noon.

The following is a full summary of Mussolini's speech to the Moslems in Tripoli this afternoon.

My just and powerful sovereign has sent me once more among you with a view to ascertaining the progress made in this territory and ascertaining your needs. You have offered me this sword, symbol of strength and justice. I shall take it to Rome and treasure it among the dearest memories of my life. As I receive your gift I wish to tell you that a new epoch in the history of Libya has already begun. You have demonstrated your loyalty to Italy by maintaining the most absolute order at the time when Italy was engaged in a distant war and offered thousands of volunteers who made an invaluable contribution to our victory. Before mid-summer the valorous soldiers who fought in Ethiopia will return to your midst and you will receive them with great

RB

-2-#112, March 18, 8 p. m. from
Rome

with great and merited honor.

After these proofs Italy intends to ensure the Moslems of Libya and Ethiopia, peace, justice, prosperity and respect for the law of the prophet and thereby wishes also to express its sympathies to Islam and the Moslems of the entire world. Within a short time Rome will convey to you with her laws her interest in your ever better destiny. Spread these words of mine in your homes, in cities and country and the remotest shepherds tents. You know that I am sparing of promises but that when I promise I keep my word.

The speech was immediately repeated in Arabic.

PHILLIPS

EDA

TELEGRAM RECEIVED

GRAY

ROME

1-1234

FROM Dated April 10, 1937

Received 3:10 p.m. APR 13 1937

Secretary of State

Washington

254, April 10, 7 p.m.

Among the measures approved by the Council of Ministers which devoted its session this morning primarily to a discussion of colonial matters were the following:

(See my 142, April 3, 6 p.m.)

The Ministry of Colonies will henceforth be known as the Ministry of Italian Africa. All land, naval, and air forces in Libya are placed under a superior command of the armed forces of North Africa.

Detailed regulations on the entire political and administrative organization of Libya were also approved "Recognizing the traditional rights of the native populations". Local civil and religious leaders will be represented in the municipal administration. Furthermore, the Governor General is authorized to suspend up to December 31 penal measures against Libyan citizens and the recent amnesty is also extended to Libya. A five year scheme for financing further colonization is now under study to include land grants to native farmers.

PHILLIPS

SMS:EDA

3650.00/5

APR 14 1937

F.P.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE865c.607/55..... FORtel. #142 6pm.....

FROMItaly..... (.....Phillips.....) DATEDApril 3, 1937.....
TO NAME 2-1127 678

REGARDING: Decrees to be issued shortly granting amnesty to
Arab rebels in Libya, particularly the Senussites who
revolted against Italian authority in 1926 and 1932.

fo

865C.00/86

CMR



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ROME, April 14, 1937.

No. 318

Subject: Measures concerning Libya and Italian East Africa, approved by the Council of Ministers on April 10, 1937.

765C.00

HISTORICAL ADVISER
MAY 3 - 1937
DEPT. OF STATE

RECORDED
257 APR 27 1937

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DIVISION OF ASIAN AFFAIRS
APR 27 1937
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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WID
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CP
APR 30 1937

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,

Washington.

72
Sir:

965C.607/55

With reference to my telegram No. 142 of April 3rd, regarding proposed reforms in the administration of Libya, and in amplification of my telegram No. 154 of April 10th, concerning the decrees for this purpose approved by the Council of Ministers on that date, I have the honor to inform the Department that the Duce notified the Council that henceforth the Ministry of Colonies would be known as the "Ministry of Italian Africa" and that "it would have new headquarters worthy of its functions."

At the request of the Duce, as Minister of the Armed Forces, the Council approved a decree creating a Naval Command for Libya and a decree creating a National Army Corps in Libya.

The

865C.00/87

671

The following measures concerning Libya, proposed by the Minister of Colonies were then approved:

1. A Decree-law instituting a "Superior Command of the Armed Forces of Northern Africa", under which are placed all land, naval, and air forces stationed in Libya. This Command is composed of a Superior Commander and a staff of officers of the different branches of the armed forces. The Governor General of Libya, if he has military as well as civil functions, is automatically the Superior Commander.

2. A Decree-law reforming the organization of Libya. "The territorial organization of Libya", according to an official communiqué, "is adjusted to the degree of civil progress which it has reached under the Fascist Government and to the function which it exercises in the Mediterranean basin."

The four Provincial Commissariats into which Libya is divided (Tripoli, Misurata, Bengasi, and Derna) will be replaced by Provinces, and the authority in charge of each will be a Prefect. The communiqué states that "this new title of the high officials of the Colonial Ministry confers upon them a rank corresponding to the important functions which they perform under the Governor General."

Each Province is divided into Commissariats, Residencies, and Vice-Residencies, under the jurisdiction of career officials.

The Southern Military Territory, subdivided into zones and sub-zones, retains its present organization, "which has proved adapted to the exigencies of the Saharan regions."

3. A Decree approving the political-administrative organization of Libya. This decree is said to contain a number of regulations regarding the functions of the central and regional government organs, the composition and functioning of advisory organizations, and the regrouping of native populations, "whose traditional rights are recognized in accordance with the principles of generous equity which inspired the organization of Italian East Africa."

4. Decree on the organization of Libyan municipalities. The system of municipalities which is already functioning in the leading centers of the colony is to be instituted in all the territory, except the Southern Military district. The communiqué asserts that "these regulations, inspired by practical criteria of administrative simplicity, will lead in all inhabited centers to a development of services in conformity to the growing needs of the national and native populations."

The mayor of the minor native municipalities may be chosen from the Libyans, and will be assisted in the larger centers by a municipal advisory body consisting of persons chosen from the representatives of the syndical organizations and the civilian and religious leaders of the local population.

5. A Decree approving the fiscal organization of the municipalities of Libya. This decree also contains regulations for the imposition of various municipal taxes, taking into account local usage and traditions.

6. A Decree assigning to the municipalities of Libya "in the general interest of the Moslem populations, property formerly confiscated from rebels". Such property, the

the value of which amounts to several million lire, will be granted as a gift to the municipalities with the condition that income therefrom or proceeds from the sale thereof, be used for the benefit of the Moslem populations.

7. A Decree authorizing the Governor General to suspend up to December 31, 1937, penal measures and the execution of sentences against Libyan citizens. This measure, it is stated, will particularly benefit the "few groups of former rebels who live in countries bounding Libya and who by this time, convinced of Italy's strength and justice, were awaiting such a measure in order to return home." Upon the return of such persons, their property, sequestered by the Government, will be given back to them.

8. A Decree extending the amnesty granted on the occasion of the birth of the Prince of Naples, to the native populations of Libya, "in recognition of the tranquility prevailing throughout the territory."

9. A Decree-law authorizing the Government of Libya to contract a loan of 24,000,000 lire for the construction of workmen's houses.

10. A Decree approving a contract between the Libyan Government and the National Cellulose and Paper Organization for the utilization of sea-weed ("Sparto") and alpha, which will "represent further progress in national economic independence and also benefit the natives, whose right to use the plants in question is amply safeguarded."

11. A Decree for the issue of postage stamps commemorating the inauguration of the coast road.

The Minister of Colonies then announced to the Council of Ministers:

(a) The study of a five-year financing plan for the further development of colonization in Libya. This plan supplements the provisions which the Government, in a law now being published, is establishing in favor of native agriculture, by assigning plots of land, first on concession and subsequently in ownership, to families of native farmers with the same technical and financial benefits now accorded to Italian farmers in Libya.

(b) Prolongation by three years of the ministerial loan to agricultural concessionaires in Libya, and the extension of this loan (of 100 lire per hectare), amounting to 21,000,000 lire, to all types of farming.

(c) The construction by the Libyan Government of 50 more houses for road-workers on the Tauorga-Ghemines part of the coast road.

(d) The construction by the National Institute for Government Employees' Houses of a number of houses in Libya at a total cost of 10 million lire.

(e) A plan to lay a submarine telegraph and telephone cable between Tripoli and Sicily and to build a new radio-telegraph station at Tripoli.

Decrees making the following provisions for Italian East Africa were then approved by the Council of Ministers:

1. Regulations on building and operating general warehouses in Italian East Africa. The regulations in force in Italy are reported to have been simplified and adopted, leaving a margin of elasticity to the individual East African Governments.

2. Authorization for the expenditure of 85 million lire over a period of five fiscal years for the construction within four years of the port of Assab.

3. The Superior Technical Committee for Italian East Africa, now functioning as an advisory body on public works, is made the chief advisory body of the Government General for all technical questions of interest to the various branches of the administration.

4. Extension to Somalia, Harrar, and Galla and Sidamo, of the regulations on trademarks now in force in Eritrea.

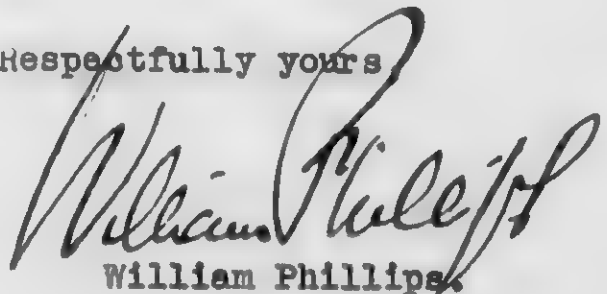
5. Extension of certain tax exemptions and credit facilities, recently established in Italy for certain kinds of commerce and industry, to Italian East Africa and Libya.

6. Extension to veterans of the Ethiopian campaign of the benefits granted by law to World War veterans.

Excerpts from an editorial by Virginio Gayda, the Government spokesman, published in the *GIORNALE D'ITALIA* of April 10, 1937, are transmitted herewith.

Fuller information on the foregoing decrees will be transmitted to the Department upon their publication in the *OFFICIAL GAZETTE*.

Respectfully yours



William Phillips

Enclosure:
Editorial in *GIORNALE D'ITALIA*.

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Excerpts from Gayda's editorial in
the GIORNALE D'ITALIA on April 10, 1937.

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The change of name of the Colonial Ministry to Ministry of Italian East Africa is merely a formal one, but the sign of a new interpretation and therefore a new trend in Italian policy toward its overseas possessions. Colonial/territory, formerly considered merely a complementary attribute of national prestige or a second-rate department of national economic expansion, is replaced in the new interpretation by a territory which without a break extends the national territorial system and interests and as such remains an organic part of national life.

The new Italian Ministry of Colonies now approaches more closely the Ministry of Interior, rather than the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but is separate from it because of its broader and different work, depending among other things upon the difference of peoples and customs in the territories under its jurisdiction.

The colony for Fascism is a strip of Italy, because destined to be populated by Italian laborers, removing permanently to that territory, and not merely a handful of officers and officials sent to organize the natives in a political way. In this aspect and function the Italian overseas territories take on an unmistakable physiognomy within the system of world colonial possessions.

Also the condition of the native populations is changed; they are elevated to the position of collaborators with the Italians on a plane which is no longer the traditional one of brutal and mechanical subjugation and exploitation.

An administrative organization also, Libya, a territory of geographical and civil vanguard in the Italian imperial system, is drawn close to Italy. We do not refer to that assimilation that has been reached between Algeria and France. Everything must proceed gradually. A great step has already been made with the new organization, which represents a more direct projection of the Peninsula's system of government to the fourth shore and raises up the native peoples to the plane of imperial dignity. With the new structure the civil evolution of the four Libyan provinces can come about more rapidly and more in conformity with the Italian lines. Such was the history of Roman colonization, today renewed by the Rome of Mussolini.

Mussolini's visit to Libya, among other things, consecrated the genuine, definitive, complete sovereignty attained by Italy in Libya. And from this sovereignty Italy, instead of closing Libya up within itself and isolating it from the Moslem world, restores to it a new and broader life which, with the assistance of all their religious, economic, and social interests, will strengthen the weight of the Libyan People within the community of the Islamic populations, making it a valuable connecting link with the other Moslem populations.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 865d.01/290 FOR Despatch #383

FROM Italy (Phillips) DATED May 28, 1937
TO NAME 3-1127 070

REGARDING:

Political affairs- Libya. In the bitterest moment of the conflict, Libya made the weight of its influence felt. The Duce has instructed the demographic colonization of Libya enter upon a period of extensive and concrete development.

LIBYA

In the bitterest moment of the conflict Libya made the weight of its influence felt. This great Italian territory facing upon the Mediterranean for almost two thousand kilometers proved a fundamental factor in our power. The Mediterranean function of Libya demands, in the very interest of the peace and civilization of Europe, an acceleration in the pace of its development. For that reason the UNICE has instructed that the demographic colonization of Libya at last enter upon a period of extensive and concrete achievement.

We shall shortly have the basic charter of the agrarian and pastoral economy of Libya, which will take into

account

account the various and occasionally contrasting exigencies of farmers and herdsmen and will make possible that continuity of work and legislation which is the goal of our efforts.

Along with economic and demographic development measures have been given for a stronger and more complete military organization. A national army corps has been permanently assigned to Libya. The presence of this great unit of our glorious army means provident preparation for any contingency; and it will not fail to call forth fresh energies in the field of production and trade to encourage the peaceful, sure expansion of national settlements.

Today we can indeed regard the Libyan problem as a mass problem, since the civil organization of the colony is such as to make any achievement in any field possible.

While we were engaged in the Ethiopian war, Libya, though depriving itself of the flower of its youth who covered themselves with glory on the fields of Gaden in the conquest of the empire, has silently dedicated itself to the work of progress and power, under the indefatigable, intelligent leadership of Italo Balbo.

The legislation issued following the Duce's promise in his Tripoli speech is the expression of a feeling and a method. On the one hand, proud and certain of her control, Italy has desired to show her magnanimity toward the now remaining Senussite refugees. Those who have already returned have been generously helped. On the other hand, in creating the four Libyan provinces, the Government recognized the civil and social development of the territory.



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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H. H. T. file

AMERICAN EMBASSY
ROME, June 24, 1937.

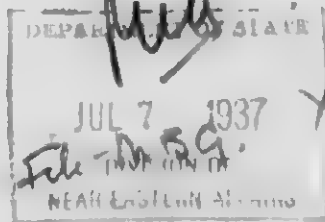
No. 445

Subject: Plans for the Development of Libya.

9650.00

FOR DISTRIBUTION - *Yes* *No*
To the State ☐
To the *U. S. A.* ☐
Co To Treasury
Committee

JUL 20 1937



*RECEIVED
FILE - WHB*

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

Sir:

With reference to the Embassy's despatch No. 318
of April 14, 1937, regarding measures concerning Libya,
approved by the Council of Ministers on April 10th, I
have the honor to inform the Department that decrees
for the following purposes were approved by the Council
at its meeting on June 21, 1937:

187
JUL 1 1937

(1) The construction of 40 houses for road superintendents along the Libyan shore road, at a cost of 175,000 lire each.

(2) The establishment of an independent section of the Libyan Savings Bank for the construction and administration of workers' houses. The Libyan Government

will ...

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
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JUL 13 1937
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
JUL 13 1937
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

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will make an annual contribution of 720,000 lire for 30 years for this purpose.

(3) Cession to the National Social Insurance Institute of a site in Tripoli for a tuberculosis hospital for its policy holders.

(4) Authorization to the Libya Savings Bank to issue special 5% bonds for a total of 400 million lire, to increase its present funds for farm and land-improvement loans. This issue is distributed into annual series of 40 millions each; the bonds are repayable in 20 yearly instalments, beginning 5 years after the date of issue, and are guaranteed by the Colonial Government and, secondarily, by the Central Government.

(5) Regulations for the demographic colonization of Libya, aiming essentially at increasing the number of small private farms to encourage the immigration of Italian rural families. Among other things, it is provided that the concessionaires of large tracts must maintain on these, even after they have become their outright property, Italian rural families.

(6) Institution of a section of the Court of Audits at Tripoli with jurisdiction over all Libya.

Further information on the foregoing decrees will be transmitted to the Department upon their publication in the OFFICIAL GAZETTE.

The press on June 18th reported a meeting held by Balbo at Hon, the leading center in the Southern Territory of Libya, and attended by all the civil, military, and native authorities of the territory. Balbo announced

that ...

that the grain crops last year had shown the effect of the progress made in the region, their production having covered the needs of troops stationed there as well as of the populations themselves. The grain-production campaign must be still further intensified, he said, so that next year the output could be doubled, thus giving a margin for export to neighboring colonies.

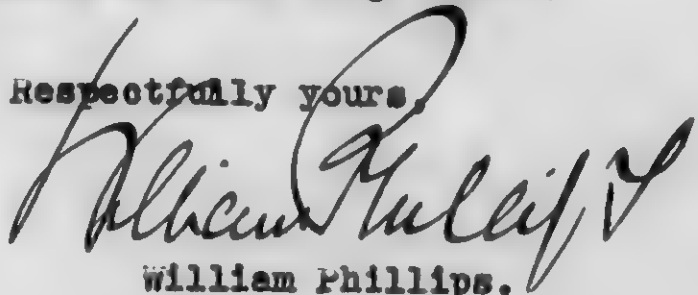
Balbo then discussed the question of repopulating the oases and announced that the land confiscated in the past and turned over to the municipalities would be distributed gratuitously to those families which, having migrated to the coastal regions in search of employment, desired to return to their native districts. The prefects of the four provinces would communicate the names of heads of families who intended to return.

He added that it had been decided to transfer the native penal farm colonies to the oases further removed from the coastal region, with the view that the coastal region had already been developed by Italian colonists whereas the oases were still to be developed.

Balbo further announced that the experimental farm station started on trial a year ago would be made permanent and would be developed. The station would have sections in various districts and a large plant nursery.

In conclusion he declared that a branch of the Libya Savings Bank would be opened on each large oasis.

Respectfully yours,


William Phillips.

GG/wrm
801.



THE FOREIGN SERVICE
RECEIVED OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF
EUROPEAN AFFAIRS

AUG 19 1937

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1937 AUG 16 AM 11 42

AMERICAN EMBASSY

ROME, August 3, 1937

DIVISION OF
COMMUNICATIONS
AND RECORDS

517

Subject: Reorganization of the Ministry of Italian
Africa.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE

AUG 18 1937

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-M/C

To the Field
In U. S. A.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
AUG 17 1937
DIVISION OF
NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

865C.00/90

AUG 20 1937

AUG 21 1937

FILED

Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
A-M/C

AUG 19 1937

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE
A-M/C

With reference to the Embassy's telegram No. 154 of
April 10, 1937, regarding the conversion of the Ministry
of Colonies into the Ministry of Italian Africa, I have
the honor to inform the Department that by Royal Decree
No. 1253 of July 1, 1937, published in the OFFICIAL
GAZETTE of July 31, 1937, the Ministry of Italian Africa
has been divided into the following offices:

- Direction General of Political Affairs;
- Direction General of Civil Affairs;
- Direction General of Economic and Financial Affairs;
- Direction General of Affairs Concerning Colonization
and Labor;

Direction....

Direction General of Personnel and General Affairs;
General Command of the Corps of Colonial Police;
Military Office;
Office of Studies;
Legislative Office.

The Royal Decree further provides that the subdivision of the foregoing offices and the distribution of work and duties among them shall be effected by decree of the Minister of Italian Africa.

Respectfully yours,

For the Ambassador:



Edward L. Reed
Counselor of Embassy.



EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

ROME, November 3, 1937.

No. 628

DIVISION OF FOREIGN
SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

Subject: Vice Consul Walker's Report on LIBYA.

*Letter to Walker
12/6/37
11/27/37*

EP

2650.00/91
8650.00/24

ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF STATE

The Honorable

The Secretary of State,
Washington.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
SECRETARY OF STATE
DEC 23 1937
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Sir:

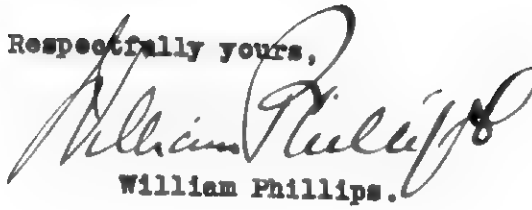
I have the honor to enclose the original and two copies of a Report on Libya, prepared at my request by Mr. Jay Walker, formerly Vice Consul at Tripoli and now stationed at the Consulate in Cairo, Egypt.

Mr. Walker informs me that this Report was prepared by him outside of office hours and a perusal of it will show the considerable amount of work involved. I, therefore, request the Department to consider the desirability of especially commending Mr. Walker for his work, since I have no hesitancy in stating that it forms a welcome and valuable addition to the information of this Embassy on the

subject...

subject of Libya.

Respectfully yours,



William Phillips.

Enclosure:

Original and two
copies of Mr.
Walker's Report
on Libya.

1944. 2. 3. 1. - 11 -

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* SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS IN LIBYA

(by Vice Consul Jay Walker)

Rec'd OCT 28 1937

Action.....

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Cairo, Egypt,

October 8, 1937.

CONFIDENTIAL.

Acquisition of Colony.

During 1911, the Italian armed forces first occupied the sea-ports of Tripolitania and Cirenaica. As the campaign progressed, the military occupation was extended to include points in several zones as far as sixty miles inland. The Treaty of Ouchy, October 18, 1912, closing the Italo-Turkish War of 1911-1912, gave Italy theoretical control of an area only about one half as large as the present Libya. The Italians were compelled, during the World War, to withdraw their military forces from the interior of the country and concentrate them behind the newly erected walls around the cities of Tripoli and Benghazi; also the towns of Homs and Derna.

Shortly after the World War, the Italians again renewed their military campaign; extended the lines of occupation along the whole coastal area, and re-occupied the towns of Misurata and Sirte as well as many inland points in Tripolitania. From 1921 to 1925, military operations were intensified and the whole Fezzan area,

* See note on last page.

800-Libya
1937-10-08

area, as far south as Lurzuch, was occupied. Active military work had to be carried on in Cirenaica until the final occupation of the oasis of Cufra in 1929.

In addition to the enlargement of the colony by military conquest, four boundary settlements between 1919 and 1935, with States holding adjacent territory, gave Italy the opportunity to practically double the size of her colony. The territory adjustments in question were:

- I Boundary settlement with France in 1919, as a result of the Treaty of 1915, gave Italy a large zone between Gadames, Essi, and Gat on the West and between Gat, Ausi, and Tumm in the south-west corner of the country.
- II The Italo-Egyptian Treaty of December 5, 1925, gave Italy a large zone on the eastern side of the colony including the oases of Giarabub and Cufra.
- III British-Egyptian-Italian Agreement of July 20, 1934, added a large area to the southern end of the colony from Uweinat south to Erdi.
- IV The Rome Accord of January 1935, between France and Italy is reported to have ceded to Italy a large area on the southern end of the colony between Tumm and Erdi.

General Description.

The combined territories which make up the present colony of Libya are estimated to total approximately 677,000 square miles -- nearly six times the size of Italy. It is generally admitted that the only parts of the colony which are habitable and which present any possibility of Italian development are the widely scattered oases along the coast between the Tunisian frontier and the town of Misurata on the western side of the Gulf of Sirte, and a comparatively small area between Barce and Derna on the East -- not a twentieth part of the whole country.

country. All the oases in the interior, with the possible exception of the Garian district, are not considered suitable for the establishment of European communities. Outside the oases, practically the whole country is either a sandy desert or barren, rocky waste lands. The climate along the coast is often damp during the winter months and very hot during the other months of the year. In the foothills of both western and eastern Libya, it is extremely hot in summer while the great desert spaces of the interior have a very unpleasant climate.

The official census taken in December 1935, showed that there were about 900,000 inhabitants in the colony of whom only about 50,000 were Europeans -- almost entirely Italian subjects.

Prior to 1935, Tripolitania and Cirenaica were governed as two separate colonies. Since that date, the country has been divided, for administrative purposes, into five districts with provincial government seats at Tripoli, Misurata, Bengasi, and Derna. The whole southern area of the country is governed as a military zone. The city of Tripoli is now the capitol of the whole colony and the seat of residence of the Governor General.

The two widely separated geographical divisions of the colony are more generally known as Tripolitania and Cirenaica

In the western part -- Tripolitania -- the chief port and city of Tripoli, with a population of about 95,000 inhabitants, is situated near one of the largest oases which is about eight miles long and three miles wide. Other oases, smaller in size, along the coast

are at Zuara -- near the Tunisian frontier -- and Homs, Zliten, and Misurata east of Tripoli, all about 30 to 40 miles apart.

Turning to the interior regions, Azizia, Tarhuna, and Gusbat are small centres about 30 miles inland where Italian colonists have attempted -- for about ten years, and without any marked success -- to cultivate open sand lands. Going further inland to the foothills at Garian, the traveler reaches one of the oldest established towns in the country. It is surrounded by some ten square miles of red clay soil where olive trees have been under cultivation for centuries. The community of Tigrinna forms a part of the Garian area. It is composed of a group of some 340 families from Abruzzi, Italy, who are settled on small plots of land under direction of the Italian Tobacco Monopoly. Beyond this point, the oases are separated by great distances. Mizda is a small oasis some fifty miles south of Garian. It is the starting point en route to the great barren, rocky, and uninhabited regions to the south-west. Along the crest of the Garian foothills to the west, small oases are found at Jefren, Giado, and Cabao. At Nalut, some 237 miles south-west of Tripoli, on one of the highest points of the Gebel, there is an important military post. South of this point, there are small oases at Sinauen and Derg. Gadames, at the junction of the Algerian-Tunisian-Libyan frontiers, is some 495 miles from Tripoli. Gat is about 498 miles farther south, at the extreme south-western corner of the colony. Due to the extreme heat, there are no civilian residents in

Gadames

Gadames and Gat during the summer months. In the winter, two or three Italian civilians live at Gadames but only military forces are held at distant Gat.

In the far central region of Tripolitania known as the Fezzan, scattered oases at Murzuch, Sabha, Ubari, Brach, Uaddan, and Hun are occupied by military forces. East of Tripoli along the coast, Homs, Zliten, Misurata, Taorqa, and Sirte are important towns and oases. From Misurata to Bengasi, a distance of approximately 450 miles around the Gulf of Sirte, there is a long barren zone of territory practically uninhabited, and made up in certain regions of sinking bog lands. The town of Sirte, about half way between Tripoli and Bengasi, has been developed into an air and marine base. Soluch, a comparatively short distance south of Bengasi, is used principally as a military distributing centre for points in southwestern Cirenaica. The city of Bengasi is the military and political headquarters of Cirenaica. The desolate waste lands around the Gulf of Sirte continue as far as the village of Tocra, about forty miles along the coast north-east of Bengasi, and run inland until the hills are reached near Barce.

The hills at Barce surround a valley of some ten square miles. This area and that running over the hilly country to Derna is covered with shrubbery. It is one of the few areas in Libya having a light soil instead of sand and rocks. Italian colonists here are from Southern Italy and have been settled at Primavera, Luigi di Savoia, and Giovanni Berta in three small groups by the Fascist Government.

The

The small city of Derna on the coast is surrounded by an oasis of some four square miles, entirely enclosed by a high stone wall built for defense purposes some twenty-five years ago. From Derna east to the Egyptian border, the landscape again turns to high desolate waste lands, almost uninhabited except for the naval and military forces at Tobruch and Bardia. The region to the south forms a part of the Great Libyan desert. Military and air bases are maintained at Mechili and Hacheim in the interior, and at Anseat on the frontier. At great distances to the south, the oases of Giarabub and Cufra are held by strong Italian military and air forces.

Political.

Italian residents in Libya agree that subsequent to the Fascist regime, there have been two marked political policies carried out. From 1924, to about 1933, the Italian public was led to believe that Libya contained great natural resources and could be developed into a rich and productive colony for the Motherland. Within the past four years, the colonization scheme in Libya has received much less publicity, and it has gradually come to be recognized that the colony will best serve as a strategic base in Italy's Mediterranean and East African program. Marshal Italo Balbo, the present Governor General, and the first to govern both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica as the colony of Libya, is confining his main efforts toward making Libya an efficient armed base.

Fascist propaganda for years tended to show that a great part of Italy's surplus population could emigrate

to

to Libya. High officials now admit that probably the maximum number of Italians who could live in Libya would never exceed 150,000. The final acknowledgement of this fact has undoubtedly influenced the Italian policy in East Africa within the past few years,

It is interesting to note in connection with Italian ambitions in Africa that official wall posters issued and distributed by the Press Bureau for the Tripoli Trade Fair in March 1937, showed a map of Africa with the Italian colors running across the entire north-east corner of the continent covering Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, and Ethiopia. These posters were given wide distribution in Libya and were received with enthusiasm by ardent Fascist followers.

Premier Mussolini's spectacular tour by automobile and aeroplane across the coastal region of Libya in March 1937, accompanied only by a group of international press correspondents and a few Party officials, is believed to be the beginning of a new colonial policy. The American news correspondents on the tour expressed the opinion to the writer that the Premier's actions and statements while in Libya had indicated to them that he sought publicity principally for his announced new role as "Defender of Islam" and for the greatly increased strength of the Italian armed forces in Libya.

After Marshal Balbo's arrival in this colony, there was a marked change in the immigration policy. Italians were no longer permitted to emigrate from Italy without first receiving permission from the colonial government

government -- and permits have been granted with strict control as to numbers and political affiliations of the applicants. There has also been a continuous series of deportations to Italy of those who settled in the colony during the administration of previous Governor Generals. Opportunity was taken during the Italo-Ethiopian conflict to deport nearly all the foreigners in the colony, many of whom had been residents there during the Turkish control.

The comparatively small number of civilians in the country gives the Governor General every opportunity to carry out his plan to make it a truly Fascist colony. Undoubtedly, the strong hand of Fascism is more evident there than in Italy. Every detail of daily life is controlled by the Party and practically every means of existence is restricted to Party members. This, of course, has forced nearly all non-Party Italians and foreigners to leave.

Great attention is given to the careful distribution of official propaganda. The two newspapers published in the country are subject to a strict censorship by the local officials, and any criticism -- either written or verbal -- of Marshal Balbo's administration makes the offender liable to deportation or imprisonment. Private mail, either to or from Italy or other countries, is censored. Italian residents known to have any contact with foreigners, either in or out of the colony, are subject to special surveillance by the secret police. Marshal Balbo himself, however, is always pleased to entertain
lavishly

lavishly any foreign press correspondents who visit the colony, providing, of course, they are known to be favorably impressed towards his colonial activities.

There is no legislative or advisory council in the colony. Full powers rest with the Governor General who rules by issuing decrees and enforcing them. Many Italian laws are enforced in Libya but in most cases, the Governor General applies his own interpretation for local enforcement. This form of Government is a unique dictatorship with the Governor General responsible only to his superiors at Rome. The Marshal's will in the colony is enforced by the activities of at least five different corps of secret service men and large units of uniformed military police, "Carabinieri". Residents discreetly complain of the espionage and counter-espionage of the various units of police against one another and against the civilian and military population. Needless to say, the residents are in a constant state of terrorism.

Military.

It is generally known that there were about thirty-thousand Italian troops held in Libya during the Fezzan campaign of 1921-1925, with a slight increase in numbers for the final military occupation of the interior of Cirenaica in 1929. Up until the beginning of Italy's active military campaign in East Africa in 1935, there is believed to have been no marked increase in the number of armed forces in Libya, but the tension in the Mediterranean thereafter resulted in the Italians increasing their forces

forces to about seventy-five thousand. The best equipped units were held in the so-called military zone in Cirenaica between Derna and the Egyptian frontier.

Later, probably a complete division was returned to Italy but in March 1937, it was known in well informed circles in Tripoli that at least three more divisions from Italy would be added to the Libyan forces. This plan was confirmed in the European press in August 1937.

During 1936, it was noted that there was a decided increase in the number of motorized detachments. These were made up mostly of Italian units although the "Zaptie", native military police force, was also partly motorized. The Italian corps are held principally for service near the coast at the main centres such as Tripoli, Zuara, Garian, Misurata, Bengasi, Barce, Derna, and Tobruch while the greater part of the native Libyans, mounted and camel corps units under European officers are stationed inland at posts such as Nalut, Gadames, Gat, Brach, Murzuch, Hun, Soluch, Giarabub, and Cufra. Due to the lack of water supply and ready transportation facilities during the long hot season, no troops have been held at posts south of a line running across the country from Gat to Cufra. At favorable seasons of the year, the Italian commanders are understood to send detachments on forced marches to visit posts on the extreme southern frontier such as Tummo and Erdi, near the Tebesti hills. The difficulties encountered may be understood by the fact that drinking water supply must be carried from Murzuch to points in the south reported by Marshal Balbo to be as much as a seventeen-day camel trek.

trek.

An enormous military construction program has been under way for several years. Troop barracks of a permanent nature have been erected at Tobruch, Derna, Barce, Bengasi, Misurata, and Tripoli to accommodate the increasing numbers of soldiers. At most of the points in the interior, new quarters have been constructed for military police and native troops. Heavy fortifications are visible at every strategical point along the coast and in certain zones on both eastern and western frontiers. In and near the cities of Tripoli and Bengasi, munition and army supply depots cover wide areas. Large new underground gasoline tank reserves were also installed at Tripoli in 1936. The possibilities that, in case of active hostilities, an enemy could blockade the coast and probably cause an almost immediate lack of food supplies to both the civilian and military populations has undoubtedly been responsible recently for the building of four reserve grain elevators in the Tripoli and Bengasi districts. During July 1933, the Governor General issued an order compelling all male Italian civilians in the colony between the ages of 18 and 55 years to be active members of the Fascist Militia. Service in the Militia requires its members to attend military drills in uniform every Saturday afternoon and Sunday, and to be available for active duty in connection with the regular armed forces at any time.

Naval.

There has been an increasing number of Italian naval vessels used in patrolling the thousand mile coast line

of

of Libya since the summer of 1935. These units include submarines, torpedo boats, and small cruisers. Tobruch, Bengasi, and Tripoli are used as bases. One of the first points occupied by the Italian expeditionary forces in 1911 was Tobruch. It was realized at that time that the natural harbor in the Gulf of Tobruch offered a potential naval base. Development of the Tobruch base on any important scale was delayed until the beginning of the Mediterranean tension in 1935. The two most serious obstacles in establishing a naval base at Tobruch have been the absence of drinking water, now carried from Derna -- a distance of about a hundred miles -- and the fact that the surrounding country is almost entirely a rocky and sandy surface of dreary waste lands. The nearest important oasis inland is at Giarabub, more than 175 miles to the south, while Derna is the closest point to the west. Eastward, the road leads to the desert lands along the Egyptian border.

The natural harbor at Tobruch runs inland nearly two miles and is from three-quarters to a half mile wide along its full length. The entrance to the harbor faces east, with a stretch of land about four miles wide on the north, separating the harbor on that side from the open sea. On both the north and south shores and around the western end of the harbor, hills rise abruptly from the water's edge to a height of about 300 feet. These hills afford a natural protection, and vessels anchored there may not be seen from the sea except through the eastern entrance. During my visit to Tobruch in March 1936, cargo vessels of from six to eight thousand tons

GROSS

gross weight, and two light cruisers were anchored in the roadstead at the extreme western or inland end of the harbor. Six submarines and five sea planes were anchored near the docks on the north side. It may reasonably be assumed that there is space and water depth at Tobruch for the anchorage of as large a fleet as Italy may care to station at that point.

The water depth at Porta Bardia -- close to the Egyptian frontier -- is known to be too shallow for the use of any but the smallest sailing vessels until such time as extensive dredging operations are carried out.

The harbors at Derna and Apollonia are also shallow and offer no natural protection for naval purposes. Troops landed at Derna during 1936, had to be disembarked about a mile from shore and landed from barges and launches.

The harbors at Bengasi and Tripoli have been constructed by the Italians since the occupation in 1911. Long concrete breakwaters have been built at both ports to protect the harbors from the open sea. Ships must pass through comparatively small entrances which are continuously being dredged. The absence of hills near both harbors leaves no natural protection for naval vessels.

The harbors at Sirte and Misurata on the Gulf of Sirte, and also Zuara near the Tunisian frontier, are so shallow that even small steam vessels must anchor in the open sea.

The impression was given, during 1936 and the early
part

part of 1937, that the Fascist authorities were attempting to make the residents of the colony "naval minded". It was noted that a fair portion of the Fascist Militia were being trained as naval reserve corps, and many units in the youthful "Ballila" and "Avangardisti" were also receiving their training for sea life. This change in instruction was considered a part of the Fascist campaign for greater naval strength.

Aviation.

Great developments have taken place in the field of aviation since the appointment of Air-Marshal Balbo as Governor General of the colony in 1935. New important military air bases have been established at "Castle Benito", some seventeen miles south-east of Tripoli, and at "Benina", between Bengasi and El Biar. Less important bases have also been erected at such strategic points as Nalut, Gadames, and Gat along the western frontier; also at Marzuch, Brach, and Hun in the interior of Tripolitania. Sirte, approximately half way between Tripoli and Bengasi on the coast, is well equipped as an air base for both military and civilian purposes.

On the Cirenaica side of the colony, in addition to the main base at "Benina", military air fields have been constructed near the coast at El Ftaiah near Derna, Tobruch, and Amseat, while Giarabub and Cufra on the Egyptian border in the distant interior are known to be well equipped military air centres.

In addition to the air bases, a series of emergency landing fields, known in the colony as "campo di fortuna"

fortuna" have been prepared. These fields are merely land-marked designations with wind signals where planes may make a forced landing on fairly level ground. Two Arab soldiers are taken to each emergency field every week where they live nearby in a dugout until relieved a week later. The decision to establish emergency landing fields resulted from the number of forced landings of military patrol planes in barren uninhabited regions.

C. 24
Special facilities have also been made at Tobruch to equip that port as a naval air base. Italian passenger planes flying between Italy and East Africa use the "Mellaha" field at Tripoli, and the old military air port at Bengasi.

The "Castel Benito" air base is reported from good sources to have cost about sixty-five million lire. This sum was spent in leveling off sand dunes to give the field an even surface, installation of water sprinkling system to keep the sandy surface moist during the long hot seasons, construction of four steel hangars, technical accessories including underground storage facilities for gas and explosive bombs, and gasoline storage tanks. A number of barracks have also been built near the field for the commissioned and non-commissioned personnel.

The "Benina" air base near Bengasi is reported to be slightly smaller in size and equipment than the new air base near Tripoli.

The importance which the Italian government places in its aviation services in Libya may be indicated by the completion, in March 1937, of a new elaborately constructed

structed building on the sea boulevard at Tripoli as headquarters for the air forces. The reputed cost is about five million lire.

It was estimated that in March 1937, there were about 325 military planes of various types held for service at the several bases in the colony. The commissioned and non-commissioned personnel were continuously being increased, up to that date, by new arrivals every week from Italy. At the time, it was thought there were probably between seven and eight hundred in the commissioned personnel and a much larger force of non-commissioned men.

Finances.

Complete official data relative to colonial finances were not available in the colony. Statistics showing the total governmental expenditures since the Italian occupation are not public information, but several prominent banking officials estimated the approximate figure at twenty-five billion lire. Due account must be taken for the several devalorizations of the lire since the World War.

Statistics showing the actual receipts and expenditures of the Colonial Government for any stated period are also lacking. On June 30, 1936, the "Bollettino Ufficiale del Governo della Libia" carried for the first time an outline of the estimated budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1937. It was proposed to balance the annual budget of 427,124,000.00 lire by contributions from the Italian Ministry of Colonies amounting to 294,750,000.00 lire. Observers agreed that the estimated budget

budget would be changed considerably by supplemental appropriations for expenditures, and that revenue from customs receipts would be far below the estimated figure inasmuch as importation of foreign goods is practically prohibited. This situation may be easily understood when it is remembered that expenditures on the occasion of Premier Mussolini's visit last March were alone reported to have reached thirty-five million lire. The costs in connection with maintaining three additional divisions of troops are believed not to have been provided for in the original budget estimates.

Some of the bankers in Tripoli expressed the private opinion that the current fiscal year will end with the Colonial Office at Rome contributing about ninety per cent. of the budget funds.

For a number of years, taxes in Libya were much lower than those in Italy. This inducement was offered to encourage colonial development. However, during 1936, this policy was abandoned and tremendous tax increases -- often six times the original amount -- were placed on business firms, as well as on certain classes of property. The new and increased taxes were believed to be the natural outcome of greater governmental expenditures which colonial residents would have to share.

Expenditures for the maintainance of the armed forces held in Libya, and construction of various military, naval, and air projects are estimated to account for at least eighty-five per cent. of the country's budget.

Nearly

Nearly all the privately constructed buildings in Libya have been financed by Government funds loaned through the "Cassa di Risparmio", a Government bank. Certain private colonial development concessions were originally financed by Government loans but later had to be taken over entirely by the Government.

Construction.

During my fifteen months residence in Libya, it was noted that Government construction projects of many types were carried out at full speed. The coastal road across the colony, from the Tunisian frontier to the Egyptian border -- which received considerable publicity in the foreign press -- was completed and opened by Premier Mussolini in March 1937. The road is 1822 kilometers long, about 795 kilometers of which were constructed during Marshal Balbo's administration. It has been reported from good sources that the total cost of the road was about three hundred million lire, including the cost of some 65 small rest houses. However, this expenditure does not include the large contribution of work and services done by the military forces who assisted by hauling material and transporting drinking water and necessities for the thousands of laborers employed to carry out such a large military strategical project. Several long stretches of the road in Cirenaica have merely a gravel surface while the remainder is macadam. In view of the unfavorable climatic conditions and frequent sand storms which blow during most of the year, it is realized that the cost of upkeep will be high. The

French

French authorities report that similar roads in their part of North Africa must be practically rebuilt every three years. As there are very few privately owned automobiles in Libya, and a very limited number of motor tourists, it is generally agreed that the coast road will serve principally as a military highway for many years to come.

Another project which has been the subject of special attention for the Fascist propaganda bureau is a boulevard along the sea front at Tripoli for about eight blocks, known as the "Lungomare Conti Volpi". Three hotels have been built at great cost by the Government on the "Lungomare" to replace private residences, whose occupants have been forced to seek shelter in less agreeable parts of the city. A similar but smaller sea boulevard has been built at Bengasi, with a large stone archway at one end and a new government hotel at the other. A series of small government hotels have also been built at a reported cost of a million, three thousand lire each in some of the more important oases in the interior, for accomodation of parties of tourists taken there under Government supervision when climatic conditions are favorable -- during the Spring months.

In many of the small towns and native villages in the colony, the Government has built a series of buildings composed of a Fascist house, military police station, medical aid station and, in some cases, a school.

It was noted that building construction work in the cities of Tripoli and Bengasi is confined almost entirely

entirely to Government institutions such as the "Istituto Fascista della Provvidenza Sociale", a "Casa di Ballila" and similar public buildings for use of the Fascist party activities. Several national banks and insurance companies have erected office and apartment buildings in and around Piazza Italia in Tripoli. Bank loans of government funds have financed the building of a limited number of private residences for officials on the eastern side of the city.

For a number of years, large sums of Government funds have been appropriated for excavation work at Sabratha, Leptis Magna, and Cirene -- present sites of ancient cities which were long ago destroyed by earthquakes and sand storms. Native crews of from two to four hundred men under direction of Italian officials are continuously employed at each site. Some of the more important ancient buildings excavated from under about fifteen feet of sand are being partly reconstructed for modern use in connection with the presentation of Roman plays as an attraction to tourist trade in the future.

Water supply for agricultural purposes has been one of the most important problems in Libya. Most of the oases have an underground water supply tapped by suitable wells which have furnished water for centuries. However, during years of drought and absence of rainfall, crops of barley, fruit, and vegetables in the oases are meager. This may be accounted for by the sandy soil both inside and outside the oases, and the disastrous effects of sand storms blowing from outlying desert regions.

regions.

Government supported agricultural societies have invested millions of lire to date in constructing irrigation schemes on the tracts of sand lands which they have attempted to cultivate outside the oases. According to the managers in charge of the irrigated lands, experience has shown them that in years of little or no rainfall the sand storms ruin every attempt at crop raising in spite of adequate water supplied by irrigation. The complete crop failure in 1936 would appear to verify this statement. It is generally admitted in the colony that the success or failure of crops in any year is not entirely dependent on irrigation facilities, but on numerous other factors which enter into the possibility of cultivating land in and near desert regions.

At most places outside the city of Tripoli, the water produced is not suitable for drinking purposes. Freight cars and motor tanks are used to transport drinking water from Tripoli to towns, villages, and land concessions -- in some places sixty miles from the city. In Cirenaica, drinking water is carried from Derna to the naval and army base at Tobruch, a distance of about a hundred miles.

The Libyan Public Works department has been actively engaged in drilling water wells for several years with Italian-made equipment. The failure to produce the desired results and the unusually long period of time involved in doing this work has recently compelled them to inquire into the use of foreign-made water well equipment.

ment. In March 1937, a foreign expert made a thorough survey of the situation and is understood to have reported that there were no prospects in Cirenaica for further water supply, but that experiments with modern well drilling equipment in Tripolitania might be successful near Tripoli and Misurata.

Colonization.

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Fascist propaganda for years has attempted to describe the alleged agricultural resources of Libya, its potential mineral wealth, as well as the possibilities of making it an important outlet for Italy's surplus population. However, the foreign press correspondents who accompanied Premier Mussolini on his visit there in March 1937, reported that no attempt was made to show them the concrete results accomplished. This move was interpreted to mean that disappointment has probably resulted from the colonization efforts.

Libya lacks a river such as the Nile in Egypt, or the Medjerda in Tunisia, which flow through rich valleys of fertile soil. Sandy soil, lack of rainfall, and disastrous sand storms ruin about six crops out of ten.

No minerals of any nature have been found in sufficient quantities in Libya for commercial purposes.

Since 1925, land development projects in Libya have been attempted under several general schemes with Government financial support. The Government first assigned large areas of unsettled dune-covered sand lands outside the oases to certain professional and business men established in Tripoli and Bengasi, under an agreement that they would bring peasant families from Italy to

develop

develop the land. The Government contributed adequate funds through loans to cover the cost for buildings, water supply, general equipment, seeds, and plants, according to the number of hectares under cultivation. This plan was not successful as it was soon discovered that the peasants took advantage of their inexperienced and city-resident proprietors. With one or two exceptions, the city landlords had to abandon their colonization attempts, go into bankruptcy, and turn over their estates to a state corporation known as the "Ente per la Colonizzazione". Several private companies organized in Italy, such as the "Societe Italiana Bonifiche Agrarie", who attempted similar colonization projects on a larger scale in the Tripoli area, were also compelled to abandon their schemes to the Government. It was noted that the principal assets remaining to the credit of the various agricultural societies were the elaborately constructed administrative buildings standing on the abandoned concessions -- slight, if any, permanent developments having been made in the field of agriculture.

In a burst of enthusiasm, the Fascist officials in 1931, organized a "Black Shirt Colony" composed of inexperienced young men who were to develop blocks of sand lands near Tripoli under supervision of a Fascist officer. The men as a group marched onto the land; built a few houses; attempted to irrigate, and establish themselves as a colony on money advanced by the Government. After three years of brave effort, the young "Fascisti" returned to Italy or drifted to Tripoli to follow other occupations.

Gradually

Gradually, the Government has found a limited number of experienced Southern Italian families to take over the abandoned lands of nearly all the privately attempted colonization schemes. With the support of further government loans and credits, a renewed effort is being made.

When it became apparent that privately organized corporations and individual concessions were not making a success of the colonization projects, the Government turned to methods of more direct control. Some 340 peasant families, with from six to fourteen children each -- mostly from Abruzzi, Italy -- were settled on land in a community known as Tigrinna, near Garian in Tripolitania, under direction of the Italian Tobacco Monopoly. Transportation from Italy was furnished to the immigrants, as well as three room houses and equipment for the ten acres of land allotted to each family -- a greater part of which had to be devoted to the cultivation of tobacco under strict direction of the Monopoly. During a visit to Tigrinna community in the summer of 1936, several of the colonists informed me that in normal years of crop production, they had found it possible to raise about 1,500 pounds of tobacco on their ten-acre plots -- which they had to sell to the Monopoly for about 3,500 lire (approximately \$182.00). Such amount, they stated, was hardly sufficient for their families to exist on without luxuries. The lack of rainfall in 1936 resulted in no tobacco crop. The Government was forced to advance funds for the needy in the colony and to give some of the heads of families work on the highway projects.

projects. Under the circumstances, the colonists at Tigrinna were badly discouraged. Although these settlers had invested no money of their own in the tobacco project, had enjoyed the advantages of the millions of lire invested to furnish them with homes etc., it was doubtful if any of them looked forward to remaining thirty years on the land in order to claim a clear deed -- as provided in their colonization contract.

Within the past four years, on the eastern side of the colony in Northern Cirenacia, the state corporation "Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia", operating under direct control of the Italian Ministry of Colonies, has brought out some 294 penniless families from Southern Italy and settled each on thirty to fifty acre plots of land, in four separate groups. The Government has financed the construction of their homes and animal sheds, paid for clearing their land, and promises to finance them in a general way for a number of years until potential crops may be raised. Heads of families must remain on the land twenty years for a clear deed. As a further inducement for the colonists to remain, the Government has constructed the nucleus of a village in the center of each group. These civil centres have been elaborately built at great cost. Each is comprised of a fairly large paved square with a fountain in the center, around which has been built a church, first-aid station, school, military police station, and a "Casa del Fascio". The names given to these centres are "Primavera", "Beda Littoria", "Luiga di Savoia", and "Giovanni Berta".

As in Tripolitania, the problem of rainfall will also be an important factor in the success or failure of European colonization on the narrow plateau of Northern Cirenaica. Large sums of government money have already been invested there and greater sums will be necessary to finance the colonists past the experimental stage of the scheme. A great deal in the future will undoubtedly depend on the willingness of the colonists to accept a complete "regimentation" of their lives and give their best efforts in spite of the availability of government funds.

Trade.

During my stay in Libya, there were many indications that the trade of the colony was practically a Government monopoly. The importation and distribution of such essential products as flour, sugar, tobacco, matches, quinine, fertilizer products, and olive oil were handled as state monopolies while the local production and exportation of wool and salt were also handled exclusively by Government agencies. Commission merchants in Tripoli reported that the tendency towards Government monopolies was making it increasingly difficult for private concerns to remain in business.

Before the Italian occupation in 1911, there are reported to have been about a hundred Europeans living in the various ports of the colony. This number did not include the Italian residents nor the Maltese families. The non-Italian European residents were mostly members of commercial houses which maintained representatives at Tripoli and Bengasi, engaged in the handling of imported

goods

goods and the exporting of barley, esparto grass, and products brought from the distant interior at the time when these cities were important centres for caravan trade.

Since the occupation, the non-Italian Europeans have been compelled (for one reason or another) to leave the colony. The exodus of foreign business men was undoubtedly caused by the complete change in the commercial policy of the colony and the restrictions placed on foreigners attempting to do business under the Fascist regime.

It is interesting to note that, according to official records, in the five years immediately prior to the Italian occupation the average annual exports and imports of Libya were as follows:

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|---------------|---------------------|
| Imports ----- | 11,892,000.00 lire. |
| Exports ----- | 9,485,000.00 lire. |

During the five calendar years from 1930 to 1934, inclusive, the average annual foreign trade of Libya is recorded as:

| | |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Imports ----- | 184,259,000.00 lire. |
| Exports ----- | 17,190,000.00 lire. |

It may be seen from the above figures that, prior to the Italian administration, the value of exports and imports of the colony nearly balanced, whereas the last official records indicate that the imports of the country exceed by ten times the amount of the exports. It is generally admitted that, in view of changed trade conditions since 1935, imports are higher in volume while exports are lower.

According to a report in the Consulate archives, Libya's imports from the United States in 1913, amounted to \$316,319.00 . Within the past few years, such trade

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is practically non-existent. Products once imported from the United States are now furnished by Italy.

The lack of any important industries, at present, in the colony -- except the manufacture of salt -- makes it necessary to import practically all manufactured products used and consumed. While no recent official statistics were available, it was estimated in good sources that probably ninety-five per cent. of the imports were of Italian origin. Goods of Italian manufacture are subject to import duties of from ten to eighty per cent. ad valorem.

Imports from foreign countries were controlled by a Government permit system and practically restricted to tea, coffee, and certain food products of prime necessity which could not be obtained in Italy. Certain merchants complained that import permits were granted only to a "favored few" who, in many cases, were not experienced importers. Government permission to pay for foreign goods delivered often resulted in long delays before the exporter shipper could be paid.

It has been estimated that, in normal years of crop production, about thirty per cent. of the foodstuffs consumed by the civilian population in the colony could be raised there. Drought and sand storms in 1936, however, resulted in practically all foodstuffs consumed in the colony that year being imported. It must be remembered also that armed forces in the country far exceed in number the European civilian population. Even in years of normal crops, the total quantity of foodstuffs necessary is far greater than local production. Italian officials are

known

known to realize that, in case of a war blockade of the colony, the food situation would be acute within a very few weeks.

Royal Decree No. 1410, of May 31, 1935, authorized the forming of a Government-financed corporation in Libya with powers to operate nearly all classes of retail distribution and general public services. This corporation is known as the "Ente Turistico ed Alberghiere della Libia". It was assured thirty million lire from various Government sources over a period of five years. High Government officials also hold important salaried positions in the new corporation. By April 1937, the "E.T.A.L." had taken over, from private concerns, control and operation of some of the most important business establishments in the colony. These include hotels, theatres, transportation, publicity advertising, steamship and air agencies, bathing beaches, lotteries, the automobile race course, clubs and cafes, tobacco stores, taxi and carriage services, and direction of the annual Tripoli Fair. The activities of the Corporation were extending each month. It was reported to have 200 directors and employers, with Government status, in charge of various branches of operation. Complaints were heard that owners of business firms taken over by the "E.T.A.L." had been forced to dispose of their interests at low prices set by the Corporation's officials. In each line of business entered, the "E.T.A.L." does not, of course, permit competition, and private firms which had not already turned over their interests to them were experiencing unexpected difficulties from official sources.

Native Moslems.

Native Moslems.

The Encyclopedia Britannica -- ninth edition, extended, 1902 -- gave the native population of Libya as 1,200,000, while the latest official Italian records indicate that there are at present only about 700,000 native Moslems in the country. Some of the old Italian residents there admit that the Moslem population has greatly decreased since the Italian occupation. This undoubtedly may be accounted for as a result of the military campaigns to conquer the country and the apparent Italian policy to rid their colony of the upper class Arab families. Those who did not fall in the campaigns between 1921 and 1929, migrated in thousands to Tunisia, Southern Algeria, and Egypt. It is evident that the Moslems in Libya are now without cultural leaders, and are decidedly less advanced in many ways than the Arabs in North Africa under French and British rule.

The nomadic tribes in the interior raise small herds of camels, goats, horses, and donkeys, and are continuously on the move in search of pasture. The drought of 1933, caused them to lose more than ninety per cent. of their herds. A great number of the Moslems living in the oases follow agricultural pursuits. A few of those living in the cities and towns are merchants, and a much larger class seek manual labor as a means of livelihood.

For several years, the Italian administration has been endeavoring to induce as many natives as possible to join the military forces. As sufficient numbers failed to volunteer for the Italo-Ethiopian conflict, conscription had to be enforced, calling to the colors

those

those between the ages of 18 and 35 years who were not the sole support of families. No attempt was made to enforce conscription on the tribes in the interior.

It was estimated in good sources that there were probably sixty thousand Libyan natives in the Italian forces at the end of 1936. This number included troops in East Africa and those stationed in Libya. During the writer's stay in the colony, there were several rather serious attempts at revolt among the natives. According to reports, the difficulties arose when the Italians started to ship native regiments to East Africa for war service. Two divisions of Libyans, however, were sent and saw active service on the Somali front. Up until April 1937, only some seven hundred wounded natives had returned from East Africa -- the remainder being accounted for as casualties, or held for further service in the East. Apparently there is little difficulty encountered in recruiting the natives for army service when the pay about equals that earned by laborers but, due to the drought and the resulting lack of food, it was recognized that they entered the Italian military forces out of necessity rather than loyalty to their conquerors.

It became evident in the latter part of 1936, that the Italians were preparing to change their previous policy towards the Arabs who had suffered heavily through loss of leaders, confiscation and destruction of property, and the stern rule of a domineering conqueror. The Italian offer to rebuild destroyed mosques and to furnish a certain number of schools came as a welcome relief to an oppressed people. Concrete evidence of the change of
policy

policy was evinced when great sums of money, as well as clothing and food were distributed freely to the Moslems immediately before and during Premier Mussolini's visit in March 1937. It may be remembered also that Marshal Balbo's proclamation to the Libyan Moslems, issued just before the Premier's arrival was to the effect that the "Duce is the protector of Islam. Shout aloud his name and invoke the light and glory on his path".

Jewish Problem.

The arrest and imprisonment at Tripoli, on December 7, 1936, of some one hundred and sixty-five Jewish store owners followed by a public flogging of two of those arrested showed that a wide breach had developed between the Fascist officials and the Jewish population. The direct cause of the mass arrest was the failure of the Jews with stores outside the old city wall at Tripoli to keep their places of business open after ten A.M. on Saturdays, in compliance with a Government order issued several weeks previously. As legal reasons for opposing the Government order, the Jews said that it interfered with their religious freedom by compelling them to do business on their Sabbath and was contrary to the declaration of General Caneva's at Tripoli in 1911, when the Italians first occupied the colony.

Official census statistics indicate that there are about 26,000 native Jews living in Libya. In addition to this number, a few Italian born Jews have emigrated to the colony. The Jewish community in Libya, as in other parts of North Africa, is comparatively wealthy and extremely active in commercial affairs -- especially

is

is this so in the cities of Tripoli and Bengasi. A very large percentage are completely Europeanized.

To the observer, it seems apparent that the Libyan Jews have been quick to take advantage of the enormous sums of money the Italians have spent in the colony since the occupation, and they must now be recognized as the one class successful in acquiring and retaining wealth. The thrift and Oriental bargaining methods of the Jew make him a serious competitor for the Italian colonist and business man.

The commercial life of the colony undoubtedly became more difficult as a result of trade restrictions and increased taxes imposed during and immediately following the Italo-Ethiopian conflict. The Jewish community naturally resented the obstacles placed in the way of normal business conditions and the losses they sustained when practically all the staple commodities imported and consumed in the colony were handled under direct ~~state~~ control by specially authorized permits distributed principally to members of the Party. Very few of the Jews in Libya are Fascist members.

According to the series of anti-Semitic articles which appeared in the Tripoli newspaper at the time the situation was most critical, the Italian official class feels that the Jews have not loyally supported them, and have failed to accept the modern spirit of Fascism, which calls for both personal and financial sacrifices from everyone. The impression given to the observer was that the Italian shopkeeper class sympathized, in some ways, with the Jews -- they also having found great difficulties
in

in carrying on business under increasing government restrictions.

After the Governor General had withdrawn the business licenses and thereby closed some twenty-six stores, the Jews were understood to have appealed their case to Rome on the basis that Marshal Balbo's order, forcing them to keep their shops open on Saturdays interfered with their religious freedom. Apparently, their appeal was unsuccessful. The matter was fully reported in the foreign press and shortly thereafter, a few of the Jewish merchants were permitted to reopen their shops.

At the time the writer left the colony, the Government had continued forcing the Jews to keep their shops open on Saturday under threat of losing their licenses. The Jews were retaliating by a quiet campaign of passive resistance, which had a decided tendency to further complicate unfavorably the business life of the colony.

Conclusions.

It is apparent that the development of Libya has been financed almost entirely by government funds, and that the colony is essentially a Government creation. Of the 46,000 Italian civilians living there, about ninety per cent. are either directly employed by the Government or dependent on government-financed agencies to earn their livelihood.

Nearly all the Italian civilian residents are those carefully selected in Italy by the Fascist Regime on a basis of Party affiliations. This policy permits the officials to carry out their announced intentions to make Libya a model "Fascist colony" to the exclusion of all others.

others.

Close observers agree that Libya has not fulfilled expectations as a colonial outlet for Italy's surplus population. The number of armed forces maintained there would seem to indicate that it has assumed importance instead as a strategical base in the defense of Italian lines of communication to East Africa as well as a possible point for operations against the colonies and possessions of other States in the Mediterranean area.

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Note.

Observations noted in this report were made throughout the writer's assignment at Tripoli between December 18, 1935, and April 7, 1937, during which time he traveled approximately 5,946 miles within the territorial limits of the colony.

1937

Dear Mr. Walker: 91

The Department has received, through the American Embassy at Rome, a copy of the report summarizing your observations in Libya.

I want to inform you that we found the material contained in this report of unusual interest and that it will undoubtedly assist us in forming a more intelligent understanding of future developments in Libya.

I want you to know, also, that the considerable amount of time and effort which you spent outside of office hours in the preparation of this report have not passed unnoticed or unappreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Jay Walker, Esquire,

American Vice Consul,

Cairo, Egypt.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

THE UNDER SECRETARY

NOV 3 - 1937

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

DIVISION OF NEAR EASTERN AFFAIRS

November 2, 1937.

U - Mr. Welles

A-W - Mr. Wilson

MR. WILSON

The press reports from Jerusalem under date of November 1st (see the attached clipping) that Mussolini has invited the fugitive Grand Mufti of Palestine to take refuge in Italian Lybia. Since the Mufti's escape from Jerusalem two weeks ago he has been in Syria but is reported to have been given on October 31st a week to leave that country. Both on account of the Mufti's previous position of authority as the principal Arab personage in Palestine and by reason of the significance of the invitation in relation to the recent general Italian policy of serving as "the protector of Islam" the Italian action may have important repercussions.

Mussolini's invitation to him is, of course, entirely in line with Italian policy since the beginning of the Italo-Ethiopian conflict which has been directed to the usurpation of Britain's position of influence and authority in the Moslem world. If the invitation is accepted it will serve further to exacerbate Anglo-Italian relations. If the Mufti is properly supplied with funds by Italy he may well continue to prove a most vexatious instrument both to Great Britain and France in the stirring up of disaffection in British

and

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and French Arab-speaking possessions.

The great importance which the Mufti enjoyed in Palestine from 1921 until the present time proceeded from his occupancy of both of the two most important non-official posts in the country, namely, those of Grand Mufti and as President of the Supreme Moslem Council.

The post of Mufti is the highest attainable in Palestine under Moslem religious law. As such he is final source of authority in the giving of fetwas or legal opinions in the Moslem religious courts in Palestine on points of Islamic law. He was appointed to this post by the British authorities in 1921, acting upon the advice of the Moslem religious leaders in Palestine, his selection following in this respect the pre-war Turkish system.

Early in 1922 the Mufti was likewise elected to the post of President of the Supreme Moslem Council in Palestine. As such he has had control both over the administration of Moslem trust funds amounting to some \$585,000 annually, as well as over the appointment of judges of the Moslem courts, and the appointment and dismissal of all officials in any institution maintained out of Moslem trust funds.

On April 25, 1936, there was formed in Palestine, incident to the activities of the Arabs against the Palestine Government, an Arab Higher Committee, composed of all the Arab parties, of which the Grand Mufti was elected President.

Actually,

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Actually, the Grand Mufti had been the focal point of Arab agitation in behalf of the Arab population of Palestine and against the Jews for fourteen years previous and his election to the post of President of the Higher Arab Committee merely ratified formally a position he had been exercising during all that time.

The Palestine Royal Commission which visited Palestine late in 1936 found that "the functions which the Mufti has contrived to accumulate in his person and his use of them" had had the effect of the development in Palestine of an Arab imperium in impero.

In the conclusions of the Royal Commission it found valid one of the Jewish grievances in respect of the "toleration by the Government of subversive activities, more especially those of the Mufti of Jerusalem". It considered it unfortunate that no steps had been taken to regulate elections for the Supreme Moslem Council. It added that the policy of conciliation "carried to its farthest limit, has failed" and recommended that should disorders break out again there should be no hesitation in enforcing martial law.

On September 26, 1937, following a succession of some nine murders of Arab functionaries or Arabs unsympathetic to the Mufti's policy, one of the four British District Commissioners in Palestine, Mr. Andrews, was murdered by

four

four Arab assassins.

According to information given our Consul General at Jerusalem by the British Attorney General of the Palestine Government, until the Andrews murder the Palestine Government had urged the continuance of a policy of moderation while the Home Government wanted more direct action. "With the murder, both saw alike; even our most pro-Arab officials concurred", the Consul General was informed by the Attorney General.

There followed the issuance of three important Regulations under the Palestine Defense Order-in-Council of 1937. They included: (1) the giving of authority to the Government to declare unlawful any body deemed inimical to public security; (2) granting authority for the deportation of five members of the Higher Arab Committee; and (3) deposition of the Mufti from his office as President of the Supreme Moslem Council and his deprivation of the control of Moslem trust funds.

No warrant of arrest was issued for the Mufti who fled a few days later to Syria. Two reasons were given our Consul General by the British authorities for their failure to proceed otherwise against him. First of all, the susceptibilities of Moslem opinion throughout the world had to be taken into account. As the Mufti had taken refuge since July in the Haram esh-Sherif (the Dome of the Rock)

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in Jerusalem, one of the three most sacred places in the world to Moslems, where he was protected by a fanatical bodyguard, the risk of invading that shrine by force to take him into custody was too great a one to incur. Secondly, it is reported that the British accept

"as basic policy that solution of the Palestine problem can best be achieved through negotiation and that the Mufti, as outstanding nationalist leader, is today (October 2d) the only person with whom negotiations can profitably be conducted; it is hoped that the present action will bring him to see reason."

This may explain the hitherto unaccountable action of the British in permitting the Mufti to escape from his place of sanctuary and to flee to Syria.

If the British entertained any notion of negotiating with the Mufti before his flight such a course would appear now as a remote contingency. There is some speculation as to whether his influence may not have been due less to his personal character than to his control of Moslem trust funds and his occupancy of the post of President of the Supreme Moslem Council, of both of which he has been deprived, and to his authority as President of the Arab Higher Committee which has now been declared an unlawful body. His position as Mufti, the sole office which he retains, which is a wholly religious one, would not necessarily endow him with any political influence and there are those who believe that his capacity for stirring up unrest in Palestine or in the

Moslem

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Moslem world will be seriously undermined now that he is no longer in control of the administration of a sum amounting to a half a million dollars a year.

According to press despatches the British and French Governments have been in correspondence relative to the Mufti since his arrival in Syria. The French apparently take the view that as a political refugee he is not subject to extradition but consider him undesirable as a permanent resident of Syria and for that reason have given him on October 31st a week to leave the country.

His further capacity for mischief-making may largely depend upon the extent to which the Italians, in consideration of their general international policy, may find it useful to employ him and the measure in which he may have conserved his influence in Palestine in the face of the removal of his power and purse-strings.

W. M. Mac. Murray

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Haven in Italian Libya Offered Islam's Fugitive Grand Mufti

Arab Leader Driven
From Palestine by Brit-
ish Must Leave Syria.

By the United Press.

Jerusalem (Monday), Nov. 1.—Premier Mussolini of Italy self-proclaimed "protector of Islam," has invited the fugitive grand mufti of Jerusalem to take refuge in Italian Libya to escape arrest by British authorities, it was understood today.

The grand mufti, Haj Amin El Husseini, escaped from Jerusalem's ancient mosque of Omar two weeks ago in the disguise of a peasant across the Libyanese frontier in Syria during a wave of Arab terrorism which he and other leaders of the Arab high committee allegedly inspired.

French authorities in Beirut, Syria, asserting that nationalist disorders against British rule in the Holy Land and French rule in Morocco are related and can be traced to unrest spread by agents of a European "totalitarian power," yesterday gave the fugitive Palestine Arabs a week to leave Syria.

It was also reported that the grand mufti, spiritual leader of



HAJ AMIN EL HUSSEINI.

837,000 Moslems and their temporal chief until stripped of his powers by British authorities, had been invited to take refuge in Baghdad as the guest of King Ghazi of the Irak government.

Mussolini's formal invitation to

Continued on Page 2, Column 2.

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Haven in Libya Reported Held Out to Mufti

Islam's Fugitive Leader
Aided by Mussolini,
Jerusalem Hears.

Continued from Page 1.

the harried grand mufti was said to be a "reprisal" against the support which he alleges British officials in Kenya Colony accorded to the refugee rases (chieftains) of Ethiopia and their families after Italy's North African conquest.

Jerusalem Arab Killed.

Jerusalem, Oct. 31 (AP). — One Arab was killed and a Jew seriously wounded today by shots fired in Jerusalem's busiest street near the district commissioner's office. Police armed with revolvers rushed to the scene in an unsuccessful search for the assailant.

French Warn Fez.

Casablanca, French Morocco, Oct. 31 (AP). — Gen. August Nogues, France's resident-general in French Morocco, entered Fez, ancient Moslem center, today and warned the natives France would press her campaign until the protectorate was purged of nationalists plotting to overthrow the regime.

DOCUMENT FILE

NOTE

SEE 851s.00/127 FOR #106FROM Tunisia (Heisler) DATED April 7, 1939
TO NAME 1-1187 070

REGARDING: Immigration of Arabs from Libya to Tunisia.

Inform of - due to defilement of an Arab mosque by Italian and German officers in Libya. Probable uprising of Arabs against local Italians if a Franco-Italian war breaks out.

865C.00/94

CHARGE SLIP

File No. 5650.00

| ENCLOSURE | CHARGE TO— | DATE | CLERK'S INITIALS | REMARKS |
|------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 85 | NE | 8/11/37 | lu | as 7-0 |
| 88-93 | NA | 4/28/38 | lu | |
| 91 | NE | 5-13-38 | EC | |
| 91 | NE | 7-21-38 | EC | |
| 98 | PS | Inland | 5/24/43 | CSP |
| 96 | PS | Inland | 10-11-43 | L.L. |

Central File: Decimal File 865C.00, Internal Affairs Of States, Libya, Political Affairs., January 3, 1930 - April 7, 1939. January 3, 1930 - April 7, 1939. MS European Colonialism in the Early 20th Century. National Archives (United States). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com/apps/doc/FSC5109731431/FGDSC?u=Domni&sid=bookmark-GDSC. Accessed 18 June 2025.